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VELS AND NOVELISTS,

FROM

ELIZABETH TO VICTORIA.

BY

J. CORDY JEAFFRESON.

AUTHOR OF "CREWE RISE,"

&c. &c.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

URST AND BLACKETT, PUBLISHERS,

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NOVELS AND NOVELISTS.

INTRODUCTION.

The distinction that once existed between *novels* and *romances* has for a long time been lost sight of. In general conversation the two words are now used as synonymous; but they had, at the period when novels first began to be generally read throughout Europe, and for long afterwards, a very different signification.

The grand feature of a work of *romantic* fiction is the supernatural character of the persons whose exploits and adventures are depicted, and of the influences to which they are subjected. Dunlop, in his famous history, says, "The species of machinery, such as giants, dragons, and enchanted castles, which forms the seasoning of the adventures of chivalry, has been distinguished by the name of Romantic Fiction." Those who are desirous of becoming acquainted with this division of literature from the "Theagenes and Chariclea of Heliodorus," and the "Ass of Apuleius" downwards, had better prosecute their studies under the guidance of Huet, the Abbé Lenglet Dufresnoy, Mon. Mallet, Dr. Percy, Ellis, and Dunlop.

The Chivalric romance, before it was for ever banished from polite society to the musty curiosity shops of antiquarians, had become distressingly prosy and tedious; it

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had lost all the vigour and beauty of youth, and had come into possession of the ungrateful qualities of a dishonourable old age. The general alteration in European manners, and the growing disbelief in enchantments and magical influences, prevented sentimental young ladies from being interested in the fortunes of heroines imprisoned by demoniacal agencies, and heroes continually exposed to dangers which social changes had rendered impossible. Disraeli, in his "Curiosities of Literature," wrote, "From romances, which had now exhausted the patience of the public sprung novels. They attempted to allure attention by this inviting title, and reduced their works from ten to two volumes. The name of romance disgusted; and they substituted those of histories, lives, memoirs, and adventures. In these works (observed Trail) they quitted the unnatural incidents, the heroic projects, the complicated and endless intrigues, and the exertion of noble passions; heroes were now taken, not from the throne, they were sought for even amongst the lowest rank of the people." As the chief merit of the old romance had been found in the incredibility of its incidents and the wildness of its plot, so the novel charmed by adhering to the simple, and sometimes stern truth of life. The first novel-writers were much more anxious that their readers should give them credit for veracity, than that they should applaud them for lively powers of imagination. Speaking of the difference in length between the romances and early novels, Disraeli felicitously observes, "Our grandmothers were incommoded with overgrown folios; and, instead of finishing the eventful history of two lovers at one or two sittings, it was sometimes six months, *including Sunday*, before they could get quit of their Delias, their Cyruses, and Parthenissas."

The source of the British novel has long been a *vexata quæstio* with antiquarians, though it is generally, and to the satisfaction of most people calculated to form an opinion

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the subject, attributed to the Italians. Certain it is, in a very short time after their first publication, the els of Italy became, through the medium of translations, popular reading of the English, and contributed power- to our dramatic literature. The most popular comedies Shakespeare are based on stories by Boccacio, Ser Gio- ni, Cinthio and Bandello. And to the two last-named ers, Beaumont and Fletcher are as much indebted as are to Gerardo and Cervantes. When Roger Ascham d the Lady Jane Grey in her chamber over her sedon Platonis" in Greek, she was, he assures us, read- it "with as much delite, as some gentleman would read erry tale of Boccase." And in another part of his ghtful "Schoolmaster" Ascham says, "if some yet doe well understand what is an Englishman Italianated, I plainly tell him. He that by living and travelling in ie, bringeth home into England out of Italie the religion, learning, the policie, the experience, the manners of ie. That is to say, for religion, Papistrie, or worse; for ning, less commonly than they carried out with them; policie, a factious hart, a discoursing head, a mind to dle in all men's matters; for experience, plentie of new chieves never knowen in England before; for manners, etie of vanities, and chaunge of filthy lying. These be inchauntments of Circes, brought out of Italie, to re men's maners in England; much, by example of ill but more by preceptes of fonde bookes, of late translated of Italian into Englishe, solde in every shop in London, mended by honest titles, the soomer to corrupt honest ers, dedicated over boldlie to vertuous and honourable onages, the easelier to beguile simple and innocent es. It is a pitty that those, which have authoritie and ge, to alow and disalow bookes to be printed, be no e circumspect herein than they are. Ten sermons at les Crosse doe not so much good for mooving men to

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true doctrine, as one of those bookes doe harm, with inticing men to ill living. . . . . In our forefathers time, when Papistrie, as a standing poole, covered and overflowed all England, few bookes were red in our tongue, saving certayne bookes of chivalrie, as they were sayd for pastime and pleasure, which, as some say, were made in monasteries, by idle monkes, or wanton chanons; as one for example, Morte Arthur. . . . And yet ten Morte Arthures doe not the tenth part so much harme as one of these bookes, made in Italie and translated in England."

Poor novels! you have ever had the schoolmasters against you. Ascham railed at Boccacio; and only the other day Dr. Arnold poured the fire of his artillery on Charles Dickens. But the "Decameron" has outlived the assault, and is still one of our best library friends. For ten who in these days forget misery and find certain elements of wisdom in the pages of Boccacio, can we find one man who extracts improvement from the works of Ascham, beautiful as they are? Who will for ages have the greater influence for good over the human race—Dr. Arnold, or the author of "Nicholas Nickleby?"

The grandest memorial that we have of what our literature owes to Italy is to be found in "The Canterbury Tales." Every one wishing to make a review of the English novel from its rise to the present time, should commence with those famous stories, many of which Chaucer borrowed from Boccacio and the imitators of the Italian novelists, and which were joined together, so as to become parts of one great tale, after the model of the "Decameron."

Though the novel succeeded to the honours of the chivalric romance, it is impossible to name an exact time at which the one ended and the other commenced. Epochs of thought are never divided by a straight line, but they run into and dovetail with each other. After a school of art has fairly died out, there have ever been, and it would seem

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e ever will be, some anxious to revive it. There are y strangely constituted beings who are incapable of estness, save when striving for a "slowly dying cause," who, though they can discern no beauty wherefore they ld love it in the fresh glow of vigorous life, are touched subdued by the fascinating gentleness of death.

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CHAPTER I.

ROBERT GREENE.

' of the many Elizabethan novelists, Robert Greene is one whose works give the reader the most agreeable of what a novel at the end of the sixteenth century

Every one who has read Sir Walter Scott's novel, e Monastery," has formed a slight acquaintance with style of the celebrated "Euphues, the Anatomie of ," and "Euphues and his England" of John Lylie, h are, perhaps, the most characteristic and noteworthy ks of fiction the age produced; but the impossibility of ailing those lengthy specimens of inflation and bombast, s to give the reader a tolerably accurate picture of their ents, without wearying him with tedious pages of empty on, has guided us in our selection of Robert Greene in erence to the favourite author of the "Euphuists."

obert Greene, an eastern counties' man, was the son a citizen of Norwich. He was born about the year), and he died in the year of our Lord, 1592,—so his was not a long one. But, short as it was, he managed chieve a vast amount of work, and to taste of deep, nant misery,—and of some joy, also, let us hope!

he list of his writings—plays, pamphlets, sermons, tales, ories—shows him to have been an industrious man; and

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there is no doubt that he was possessed of considerable learning, and was rich in that somewhat undefinable commodity called "knowledge of the world." He was educated at St. John's College, Cambridge, in which university he took the degree of M.A. in 1583. He was also a Master of Arts of Oxford, and spent some time in travels into Italy and Spain. It is more than probable that he took orders, and was presented to the living of Tollesbury, in Essex. Supposing such to be the case, he was deprived of his preferment for irregular living. It is certain, for we have it on his own confession, that he was a dissolute fellow, ever in extremes of excess or contrition,—one of those poor wretches who, without enough moral hardihood to keep out of the ways of error, have too much conscience to be able to get anything like a handsome measure of enjoyment out of sin.

The authors, by profession, of the Elizabethan age, were the veriest wretches that a love of letters ever pulled down with starvation and pricked up with contumely. Greene's intimate was Thomas Nashe, a man who was born at Lowestoft, in Suffolk, and was, like Greene, educated at St. John's College, Cambridge. Nashe evidenced his love for the district in which his youth was passed, by celebrating the excellencies of Yarmouth, in a book called "Nashe's Lenten Stuffe, containing the Description and First Procreation of Great Yarmouth, &c." His writings are now known only to antiquarians, but his "Pierce Pennilesse" deserves a wider circle of acquaintance: for it is a touching picture of sufferings literary men of genius endured in his day,—sufferings, compared with which those of Pope's Grub-street were nothing. Pierce Pennilesse says: "All my labours turned to losse,—I was despised and neglected, my paines not regarded, or slightly rewarded, and I myself, in prime of my best wit, laid open to povertie. Whereupon I accused my fortune, railed on my patrons, bit my pen, rent my

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apers, and raged. . . How many base men that wanted hose parts I had, enjoyed content at will, and had wealth t command! I called to mind a cobbler that was worth ve hundred pounds; an hostler that had built a goodly an; a carman in a leather pilche that had whipt a thousand ound out of his horses tail—and have I more than these? hought I to myself: am I better born? am I better rought up? yea, and better favoured! and yet am I a eggar! Now am I crost, or whence is this curse? Even om hence, the men that should employ such as I am, are namoured of their own wits, though they be never so urvie; that a scrivener is better paid than a scholar; and en of art must seek to live among cormorants, or be kept nder by dunces; who count it policy to keep them bare to ollow their books the better."

Greene's perseverance and assiduity in his vocation did ot preserve him from that poverty his friend Nashe so ell described, and when a few pieces of gold did find their ay into his hands from a book-vendor's pocket they were peedily dissipated in feasting and debauchery. The imme- iate cause of his death was devouring an imprudent llowance of pickled herrings, and washing them down with henish wine, at a banquet at which Tom Nashe was present. ut his health had long before that been in a declining tate, and he well knew that feast of herrings and wine was ne of the last meals he was destined to partake of upon arth.

In a fit of remorse, as he regarded his abused life—the rostitution of his powers—the debasement of his mind—e wrote:—

"Deceiving world that with alluring toys,
Hast made my life the subject of my scorn;
And scornest now to lend thy fading joys,
T'outlength my life, whom friends have left forlorn,
How well are they that die ere they be born,
And never see thy slights, which few men shun,
Till unawares they hapless are undone.

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Oft have I sung of Love and of his fire,
But now I find that poet was advised,
Which made full feasts increasers of desire,
And proves weak love was with the poor despis'd;
For when the life with food is not suffic'd,
What thoughts of love, what motion of delight,
What pleasance can proceed from such a wight?

Witness my want, the murderer of my wit,
My ravish'd sense of wonted fury reft,
Wants such conceit, as should in poems fit,
Set down the sorrow wherein I am left;
But therefore have high heavens their gifts bereft,
Because so long they lent them me to use,
And I so long their bounty did abuse.

O, that a year were granted me to live!
And for that year my former wits restor'd;
What rules of life, what counsel would I give,
How should my sin with sorrow be deplor'd!
But I must die of every man abhor'd:
Time loosely spent will not again be won,
My time is loosely spent, and I undone."

No, no, Robert Greene! it's all very fine, but you would not have altered a jot—that you wouldn't!

It is touching, though, to hear this cry coming from a dying penitent through nigh three hundred years, for just twelve short months more of existence. Poor wretch! struggling into death without hope—with a heart yearning for that which *might have been!* The man, too, is no stranger to us. In all likelihood, he was a chosen companion of the young Shakespeare; had roared out the choruses of drinking songs with him; had in hours of mirth looked into the laughing eyes of the great poet! Anyhow, his days were spent in Shakespeare's London, and he drained cups of sack with the Pistols and Sir Johns of that roistering city, like a jolly good fellow.

The title-page of "Greene's Never too Late" will amuse those not acquainted with books of the period.

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GREENES
NEVER TOO LATE
BOTH PARTS.

Sent to all youthfull Gentlemen, to roote out the infectious follies that over-reaching conceits foster in the spring time of their youth.
Deciphering in a true English History, those particular vanities, that with frostie vapours, nip the blossomes of every braine, from attayning to his intended perfection.
As pleasant as profitable, being a right Pumice Stone, apt to race out idlenesse with delight, and follie with admonition.
Rob. Greene, in Artibus Magister
Omne tulit punctum:
London.
Printed for Nicholas Fing.
1607.

The novel opens thus:—*

"Being resident in Bergamo, not farre distant from Venice, sitting under a coole shade that then shrowded me from the extreme violence of the miridional heat, having never a book in my hand to beguile time, nor no pathetical impression in my head to procure any secret meditation, I had flat faln into a slumber, if I had not espied a traveller, weary and desolate, to have bended his steppes towards me. Desirous to shake off drowsinesse with some company, I attended his arrival; but as he drew neere, hee seemed so quaint in his attire, and so conceited in his countenance, as I deemed the man either some penitent pilgrime that was very religious, or some despairing lover that had been too affectionate. For take his description:—

"AN ODE.

" 'Downe the valley gan he tracke,
Bagge and bottle at his backe,
In a surcoate all of gray,
Such weare palmers on the way;

* In transcribing from the black-letter editions of certain books that have been and are to be quoted in those pages, it has been endeavoured to preserve the irregularities of grammar and spelling of the originals. Now and then, however, a glaring error of the printer has been corrected; and the v and u will be found to be used as in modern books.

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When with scrip and staffe they see
Jesus grave on Calverie;
A hat of straw like a swaine,
Shelter for the sun and raine,
With a scollop shel before:
Sandals on his feete he wore:
Legs were bare, armes unclad:
Such attire the Palmer had.
His face faire, like Tytans shine,
Gray and buxome were his eyne,
Whereout dropt pearles of sorrow,
Such sweet tears love doth borrow,
When in outward deawes she plaines,
Harts distresse that Lovers paines:
Rubie lips, cherrie cheekes,
Such rare mixture Venus seekes,
When to keep her damsels quiet,
Beautie sets them down their diet.
Adon was not thought more faire:
Curled locks of amber haire;
Locks, where Love did sit and twine
Nets, to snare the gasers eyne:
Such a Palmer nere was seene,
Lesse Love him-selfe had Palmer beene.
Yet for all he was so quaint,
Sorrow did his visage taint.
Midst the riches of his face,
Griefe desciphered high disgrace:
Every step strained a teare,
Sudden sighes shewd his feare:
And yet his feare by his sight,
Ended in a strange delight;
That his passions did approve,
Weedes and sorrow were for love.'

"Thus attired in his travelling roabes (not seeing me that lay close in the thicket), he sat him downe under a beech tree."

After a short while Mr. Robert Greene accosts this interesting Palmer, and, having had a satisfactory conversation with him, in a magnificently high strain, begs to have the pleasure of entertaining him in his own house. The Palmer accepts the invitation, accompanies Mr. Greene to his house, is introduced to Mrs. Greene, and partakes of a

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banquet of elegant simplicity. The supper concluded, the Palmer tells his host a story.

"THE PALMER'S TALE.

"In those daies when Palmerin reigned King of Great Britanie, famoused for his deedes of chivalrie, there dwelled in the cittie of Caerbranke, a gentleman of an anncient house, called Francesco, a man, whose parentage though it were worshippeful, yet it was not indued with much wealth; insomuch, that his learning was better than his revenewes, and his wit more beneficiall than all his substance. This Segnior Francesco, desirous to bende the course of his compasse to some peaceable porte, spread no more cloth in the winde than might make easie saile, lest hoysting up too sodainely above the maineyard, some sudden gust might make him founder in the deepe. Though hee were yet young, yet he was not rash with Icarus, to soare into the skie, but to cry out with old Dædalus, 'Medium tenere tutissimum:' treading his shoe without any slippe. He was so generally loved of the cittizens, that the richest marchant, or gravest Burgmaster would not refuse to grant him his daughter in marriage, hoping more of his ensuing fortunes than to his present substance. At last, casting his eie on a gentleman's daughter that dwelt not very far from Caerbranke, he fell in love, and prosecuted his sute with such affable courtesie, as the maide considering the vertue and wit of the man, was content to set up her reste with him, so that her father's consent might bee at the knitting up of the match. Francesco thinking himselfe cockesure, as a man that hoped his credite in the cittie might carry away more than a countrey gentleman's daughter, finding her father on a day at fit opportunity, he made the motion about the grant of his daughter's marriage. The old churle that listned with both his eares to such a question, did not in this 'in utramvis aurem dormiri,' but leaning on his

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elbow, made present answere, that her dowrie required greater feofment than his lands were able to affoord. An upon that, without further debating of the matter, he ros up and hied him home, whither as soone as he came, h called his daughter before him, whose name was Isabel, t whom he uttered those words—'Why, huswife,' quoth he 'are you so idle tasked, that you stand upon thornes unti you have a husband? Are you no sooner hatched with th lapwing but you will run away with the shell on your head Soone prickes the tree that will prove a thorne, and a gi that loves too soone will repent too late. What, a husband Why, the Maids of Rome durst not looke at Venus temp till they were thirtie, nor went they unmasked till the were married, that neither their beauties might allure othe nor they glance their eies on every wanton. I tell the fonde girle, when Nilus overfloweth before his time, Egy is plagued with a dearth: the trees that blossome in Febr ary are nipped with a frost in May: untimely fruits have nev good fortune, and young gentlewomen, that are wooed a won ere they be wise, sorrow and repent before they b old. What seest thou in Francesco, that thine eye mu choose, and thy heart must fancie? Is he beautifull? Wh fond girle, what the eye liketh at morne, it hateth at nigh love is like a baven but a blaze and beauty why how can better compare it than to the gorgeous cedar, that is one for shew, nothing for profit? to the apples of Tantal that are precious in the eye, and dust in the hand? to t starre Artophylax, that is most bright, but fitteth not any compasse? So young men, that stand upon their o ward portraiture, I tell thee they are prejudiciall. Den phoon was faire, and how dealt hee with Phillis? Eneas wa brave man, but a dissembler. Fond girle, all but little wor if they be not wealthy: and I pray thee, what substance h Francesco to indue thee with? Hast thou not heard that w freaks amity, that love beginneth in gold and endeth in b

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gery, that such as marry but to a faire face, tie themselves oft to a foule bargain? And what wilt thou doe with a husband that is not able to maintaine thee? But, forsooth a dram of pleasure with a pound of sorrow, and a pint of content with a whole tunne of prejudiciall displeasures. But why doe I cast stones into the ayre, or breathe my words into the winde, when to perswade a woman from her will is to roule Sisyphus stone; or to tie a headstrong girle from love, is to tie the Furies again in fetters? Therefore, huswife, to prevent al misfortunes I will be your jaylor.' And with that he carried her in, and shut her up in his owne chamber, not giving her leave to depart but when his key gave her license; yet at last shee so cunningly dissembled, that she got thus farre liberty, not to bee close prisoner, but to walke about the house; yet every night hee shut up her clothes, that no nightly feare of her escape might hinder his broken slumbers."

Francesco and Isabel contrived to elude the vigilance of the austere father, and through the aid of an old beggar-woman managed to exchange letters. Francesco is the first to write, and his epistle runs thus,

"'SEIGNEUR FRANCESCO TO FAIRE ISABEL,—When I note (faire Isabel) the extremity of thy fortunes, and measure of the passions of my love, I finde that Venus hath made thee constant to requite my miseries, and that where the greatest onset is given by fortune, there is strongest defence made by affection; for I heard that thy father, suspitious, or rather jealous of our late united sympathy, doth watch like Argus over Io, not suffering thee to passe beyond the reach of his eye, unlesse (as hee thinks) thou shouldst over-reach thy-selfe. His minde is like the tapers in Janus Temple, that set once on fire, burne till they consume themselves; his thoughts like the sunnebeames, that search every secret. Thus watching thee, he overwaketh himself, and yet (I hope) profiteth as little as they which gase on

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the flames of Ætna, which vanish out of their sigl
smoake.

"'I have heard them say (faire Isabel) that as the
mondes are tried by cutting of glasse, the topace by bi
the force of the anvile, the kethin wood by the hardn
so womens excellence is discovered in their consta
Then, if the period of all their vertues consist in this,
they take in love by moneths, and let it slip by min
that, as the tortoise, they creep *pedetentim*, and when
come to their rest, will hardly be removed. I hope
wilt confirme in thy loves the very patterne of femi
loyalty, having no motion in thy thoughts, but fancie,
no affection, but to thy Francesco. In that I am sto
from thy sight, I am deprived of the chiefest organ of
life, having no sense in my life perfect, in that I want
viewe of thy perfection, ready with sorrow to perish in
spaire, if resolved of thy constancy, I did not triump
hope. Therefore now rests it in thee to salve all t
sores, and provide medicines for these dangerous mala
that our passions appeased, we may end our harmony in
faithfull union of two hearts. Thou seest Love hath
shifts, and Venus quiddities are most subtile sophist
that he which is touched with beautie, is ever in lea
with opportunitie, these principles are prooved by the n
senger, whose taste discovers my restlesse thoughts, im
tient of any longer impulse. I have therefore sought
overmatch thy father in policie, as he overstraines us
jealousie, and seeing he seeks it, to let him finde a kno
a rush: as therefore I have sent thee the summe of
passions in forme of a pasport, returne me a reply wrapt
the same paper, that as wee are forced to court our dec
in one shift, so hereafter we may unite our loves in
simpathy: appoint what I shall doe to compasse a priv
conference. Thinke I will account of the seas as Leand
of the warres as Troylus; of all daungers as a man resol

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to attempt any peril, or breake any prejudice for thy sake. Say, when and where I shall meete thee, and so, as I begun passionately, I brake off abruptly. Farewell.—Thine in fatall resolution, SEIGNEUR FRANCESCO.'"

Such a letter deserved an answer, and Isabel, after much consideration, favoured him with the following reply:

"'ISABEL TO FRANCESCO: Health.—Although the nature of a father, and the dutie of a childe, might moove me resolutely to reject thy letters, yet I received them, for that thou art Francesco and I Isabel, who were once private in affection, as we are now distant in places. But know, my father, whose command to me is a law of constraint, sets downe this censure, that love without wealth is like to a cedar tree without fruite, or to corne sowne in the sandes, that withereth for want of moysture; and I have reason, Francesco, to deeme of snow by the whitenesse, and of trees by the blossoms. The old man, whose wordes are oracles, telles me, that love that entereth in a moment, flyeth out in a minute; that mens affections are like the deaw uppon a christall, which no sooner lighteth on, but it leapeth off. Their eies, with every glance, make a new choice, and every looke can commaund a sigh, having their harts like saltpeeter, that fiereth at the first, and yet proveth but a flash; their thoughts reaching as high as cedars, but as brittle as rods that breake with every blast. Had Carthage beane bereft of so famous a virago if the Trojan had been as constant as he was comely? Had the Queene of Poetrie beene pinched with so many passions if the wanton ferriman had been as faithfull as he was faire? No, Francesco, and therefore, seeing the brightest blossomes are pestered with most caterpillers, the sweetest roses with the sharpest prickes, the fairest cambricks with the foulest staines, and men with the best proportion have commonly least perfection, I may feare to swallow the hooke, lest I find more bane in the confection than pleasure in the bait; but here let me breathe, and

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with sighs foresee mine owne folly. Women, poore soules, are like to the harts in Calabria, that knowing dictamum to bee deadly, yet browse on it with greedinesse; resembling the fish mugra, that seeing the hooke bare, yet swallowes it with delight; so women foresee, yet do not prevent, knowing what is profitable, yet not eschewing the prejudice. So Francesco, I see thy beauties, I know thy want, and I feare thy vanities, yet can I not but allow of all, were they the worst of all, because I finde in my mind this principle, in love is no lacke. What should I, Francesco, covet to dally with the mouse, when the cat stands by, or fill my letter full of needlesse ambages when my father, like Argus, setteth a hundred eyes to overprie my actions? While I am writing, thy messenger stands at the door praying; therefore, lest I should hold her too long at her orisons, or keepe thee (poore man) too long in suspense, thus briefly; Be upon Thursday next, at night, hard by the orchard, under the greatest oke, where expect my comming; provide for our safe passage, for stoode all the world on the one side, and thou on the other, Francesco should be my guide, to direct me whither he pleased. Faile not then, unlesse those be false to her that would have life faile ere shee falsifie faith to thee.—Not her owne, because thine, ISABEL.'

"As soone as she had dispatcht her letter shee came downe, and delivered the letter in forme of a pasport to the messenger, giving her after her accustomed manner an almes, and closely clapt her in the fist with a brace of angels. But, after she had sent her letter, she fell into a dump, entring into the considerations of mens constancy, and of the ficklenes of their fancies; but all these meditations did sort to no effect: whereupon sitting downe, shee tooke her lute in her hand, and sung an ode.

"Having finished her ode, she heard that her father was come in, and therefore leaving her amourous instruments, she fel to her labour, to confirme the old proverb in her

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father's jealous head, 'Otia si tollas,' &c.: but as warie as shee was, yet the old goose could spie the gosling winke, and would not by any means trust her, but used his accustomed manner of restraint: yet as it is impossible for the smoke to be concealed, or the fire to bee suppressed, so Fregoso could not by subtile drifts so warily watch his transformed Io, but she found a Mercurie to release her, for upon Thursday, lying in bedde with but little intent to sleepe, she offered many sighs to Venus, that shee should be Oratresse to Morpheus, that some dead slumber might possesse all the house; which fell out accordingly, so that at mid-night she rose up, and finding her apparel shut up, she was faine to goe without hose, onely in her smocke and her peticoate, with her father's hat and an old cloake. Thus attired like Diana, in her night-geere, she marcheth down softly, where shee found Francesco ready with a private and familiar friend of his to watch her comming foorth, who, casting his eie aside, and seeing one in a hat and cloake, suspecting some treacherie, drew his sword; at which Isabel smiling, she incountred him thus:

"'Gentle sir, if you be as valiant as you seeme cholericke, or as martiall as you would bee thought hardie, set not upon a weaponlesse woman, lest in thinking to triumph in so mean a conquest, you be prejudiced with the taint of cowardise. 'Twas never yet read that warlike Mars drew his fawchion against lovely Venus, where her offence never so great or his choller never so much. Therefore, gentleman, if you be the man I take you, Isabel's Francesco, leave off your armes and fall to amours, and let your parley in them be as short as the night is silent, and the time dangerous.' Francesco seeing it was the paramor of his affections, let fall his sword, and caught her in his armes, ready to fall in a swound by a sudden extasie of joy: at last recovering his sence, he incountred her thus:

"'Faire Isabel, Natures overmatch in beautie, as you are

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Dianaes superiour in virtue: at the sight of this attire I drewe my sword, as fearing some privy foe; but as soone as the view of your perfection glanced as an object to mine eie, I let fal my armes, trembling as Actæon did, that hee had dared too farre in gasing against so gorgeous a goddesse: yet readie in the defence of your sweet selfe, and rather than I would loose so rich a prize, not only to take up my weapon, but to encounter hand to hand with the stoutest champion in the world.' 'Sir' (quoth shee) 'these protestations are now bootlesse; and therefore to be briefe, thus (and with that the teare trickled downe the vermilion of her cheeks, and shee blubbered out this passion): O Francesco, thou maist see by my attire the depth of my fancie, and in these homely roabes mayst thou note the retchlesnes of my fortunes, that for thy love have strained a note too high in love. I offend nature as repugnant to my father, whose displeasure I have purchast to please thee: I have given a finall farewell to my friends, to bee thy familiar: I have lost all hope of preferment, to confirme the sympathie of both our desires. Ah, Francesco, see, I come thus poore in apparrell, to make thee rich in content. Now if hereafter, (oh let me sigh at that, lest I bee forced to repent too late) when thy eie is glutted with my beautie, and thy hotte love prooved soone cold, then beginst thou to hate her that thus loveth thee, and proove as Demophoon did to Phyllis, or as Æneas did to Dido. What then may I doe, rejected, but accurse mine owne follie, that hath brought me to such hard fortunes? Give me leave, Francesco, to feare what may fall, for men are as inconstant in performance, as cunning in practice.' She could not fully discourse what she was about to utter, but he broke off with this protestation: 'Ah, Isabel, although the windes of Lepanthus are ever inconstant, the chrisrol ever brittle, the polipe ever changeable, yet measure not my minde by other motions, nor the depth of my affection by the fleeting of other fancies, for,

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as there is topace that will yeeld to every stampe, so there is an emerald that will yeeld to no impression. The selfe-same Troy, as it had an Æneas that was fickle, so it had Troilus that was constant. Greece had a Pyramus, as it had a Demophoon, and though some have been ungratefull yet accuse not all to be unthankfull, for when Francesco shall let his eie slip from thy beauty, or his thoughts from thy qualities, or his hart from thy vertues, or his whole life from ever honouring thee, then shall heaven cease to have starres, the earth trees, the world elements, and every thing reversed, shall fall to their former chaos.'

"'Why then (quoth Isabel), to horseback, for feare the faith of two such lovers be impeached by my father's wakefull jealousie.' And with that (poore woman) halfe naked as she was, she mounted, and as fast as horse could pace away, they post towards a towne in the said country of Brittaine, called Duncastrum. Where let us leave them in their gallop, and returne to old Fregoso, who, rising early in the morning, and missing his daughter, askt for her through the whole house: but seeing none could discover where she was, and assured of her escape, he cried out as a man halfe lunaticke, 'that hee was by Francesco robd of his onely jewell.' Whereupon, in despairing fury, he caused al his men and his tenants to mount them, and to disperse themselves with hue and cry for the recovery of his daughter, hee himselfe being horst, and riding the readie way to Duncastrum. Where hee no sooner came, but fortune meaning to dally with the old dotard, and to present him with a bone to gnaw on, brought it so to passe, that as he came riding downe the towne hee met Francesco and his daughter comming from the church, which although it pierst him to the quicke, and straind every string of his heart to the highest note of sorrow, yet he concealed it till he tooke his inne: and then stumbling as fast as hee could to the Maiors house of the towne, he revealed unto him the whole

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cause of his distresse, requiring his favour by the clapping up of this unruely gentleman: and to make the matter more heinous, he accused him of felony, that he had not onely, contrary to the custome bereft him of his daughter against his will, but with his daughter, had taken away certain plate. This evidence caused the Maior straight, guarded with his officers, to march down with Fregoso, to the place where Isabel and her Francesco were at breakfast, little thinking (poore soules) such a sharp storme should follow so quiet a calme: but fortune would have it so. And, therefore, as they were carowsing each to other in a sweete frolike of hoped for content, the Maior rusht in, and apprehended him of felony, which drave the poor perplexed lovers into such a dumpe, that they stoode as the pictures that Perseus with his shield turned into stones. Francesco presently with a sharpe insight entered into the cause, and perceived it was the drift of the old foxe his father in law, wherefore he took it with more patience. But Isabel, seeing her new husband so handled, fell into a swound for sorrow, which could not prevaile with the serjeants, but they conveyed him to prison, and her to the Maior's house."

Francesco's imprisonment, however, is not for long. The Mayor takes the side of the young people, and discovering there is no truth in the charge of felony, he conveys Isabel to the prison, that she may liberate her lover. They arrive at the young man's dungeon just as he is "taking a citterne in his hand," and commences "warbling out an ode." As the reader has already had a specimen of Mr. Greene's odes, we will not insert the one Francesco warbled out on the present occasion, but take up the story at the conclusion of the harmony.

"Having thus chaunted over his ode, hee heard the chamber doore open, whereupon he grew melancholie: but when he saw the goddesse of his affection, on whose constant loyalty depended the essence of his happinesse, hee started,

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as when love-sick Mars saw Venus entering his pavilion in triumph, entertaining them all generally with such affabilities, and her particularly with such courtesie, that hee shewed himselfe as full of nurture as of nature. Interchange of entertainment then past betweene these two lovers, as well with emphasis of wordes, as extasie of mindes, concluding with streames of pathetical teares. The Mayor at last entred parley, and told Francesco, though his father-in-law had alleadged felony against him, yet because he perceived that it rather proceeded of some secret revenge than any manifest truth, and that no further evidence came to censure the allegation, he was content to set him at libertie conditionally: Francesco should give his hand, to bee answerable to what hereafter in that behalfe might be objected against him. These conditions accepted, Francesco was set at libertie, and hee and Isabel joyntly together taking themselves to a little cottage, began to be as Ciceronicall as they were amorous: with their hands' thrift coveting to satisfie their harts' thirst, and to bee as diligent in labours as they were affectionate in loves, so that the parish in which they lived so affected them for the course of their life, that they were accounted the very mirrors of a Democraticall methode, for he being a scholler, and nurst up in the universities, resolved rather to live by his witte than any way to be pinched by want, thinking this old sentence to be true, that 'wishers and woulders were never good householders;' therefore he applied himself in teaching of a schoole, where by his industry, hee had not only grate favour, but gat wealth to withstand fortune. Isabel, that she might seeme no less profitable than her husband carefull, fell to her needle, and with her worke, sought to prevent the injurie of necessitie. Thus they laboured to maintain their loves, being as busie as bees and as true as turtles; as desirous to satisfie the world with their desert, as to feede the humours of their owne desires. Living

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thus in a league of united vertues, out of this mutuall concorde of confirmed perfection, they had a son aunswerable to their own proportion, which did increase their amitie, so as the sight of their young infant was a double ratifying of their affection. Fortune and love thus joyning in league to make these parties forget the stormes that nipped the blossomes of their former yeres, addicted to the content of their loves this conclusion of blisse. After the terme of five yeares, Segnior Fregoso, hearing by sundrie reports the fame of their forwardnes, howe Francesco coveted to be most loving to his daughter, and she most dutiful to him, and both strive to exceede one another in loyaltie: glad at this mutuall agreement, hee fell from the furie of his former melancholly passions, and satisfied himselfe with a contented patience, that at last he directed letters to his sonne-in-law, that he should make repair to his house with his daughter, which newes was no sooner come to the eares of this maried couple, but providing for al things necessarie for the furniture of their voyage, they posted as fast as they could towards Caerbranke, where, speedily arriving at their father's house, they found such friendly entertainment at the old mans hands that they counted this smile of fortune able to countervail al the contrarie stormes, that the adverse planets had inflicted upon them."

From this period of good nature, however, fortune changes to the young couple, and their matrimonial course becomes troubled. Francesco has occasion to leave his wife, and to travel on business to the city of Troynovant, at which place he falls in love with a very worthless lady, named Infida, to whom he pays his addresses in Euphuistic style, and who responds in the same strain. At first they only ogle each other across the street, but soon they interchange letters and odes—eventually, they commit improprieties for which there is not the *slightest* excuse. Isabel hears of Francesco's infidelity, and tries to reclaim him

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from the syren's influence by sending him the most exemplary letters; which he, base man! treats with neglect. During the continuance of this state of things, the deserted Isabel well nigh falls a victim to the machinations of a wicked old judge. The story of "Susannah and the Elders" (which History, by-the-bye, Robt. Greene amplified and made into a novel, and published under the title of "The Myrrour of Modestie") is acted once again. Isabel displays the virtue of Susannah, and, when on the point of being condemned of a heinous crime, is shown to be innocent by a providential interposition. The fame of Isabel's excellence hereupon spreads through the country, and reaches the ears of her husband at Troynovant, who has already split with Infida. Francesco, on receiving the intelligence so honourable to his wife, suddenly bethinks himself that he has been guilty of injustice to her, repents, and determines to return home to Caerbranke. After a festive entertainment and an affecting farewell to his bachelor acquaintance at Troynovant, our hero acts on his good resolution, starts for home, and without any mishaps reaches the presence of the much-wronged Isabel.

"Within fives daies he arrived at Caerbranke, where, as soone as he was lighted, he went to the house where his wife sojourned; and one of the maids espying Francesco, yet knew him for al his long absence, and ranne in and told it to Isabel, that her husband was at the dore. She being at work in her chamber, sate as one in extasie, until Francesco came up, who, at the first sight of his wife, considering the excellency of her beautie, her vertues, chastity, and other perfections, and measuring her constancy with his disloyaltie, stoode as a man metamorphosed: at last he began thus:—'Ah, Isabel, what shall I say to thy fortunes or my follies? what exordium shall I use to show my penance, or discover my sorrowes, or expresse my present joyes? For I tel thee I conceave as great pleasure to see

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thee wel, as grief in that I have wronged thee with my absence. Might sighs, Isabel, teares, plaintes, or any such exterior passions pourtray out my inward repentence, I would shew thee the anatomie of a most distressed man: but amongst many sorrowing thoughts, there is such confusion, that superfluitie of griefes stops the source of my miscontent. To figure out my follies, or the extremity of my fancies, were but to manifest the bad course of my life, and to rub the scar, by setting out mine own scathe: and therefore let it suffice, I repent heartily, I sorrow deeply, and meane to amend and continue in the same constantly.' At this Francesco stood and wept, which Isabel seeing, conceived by his outward griefs his secret passions, and therefore taking him about the neck, wetting his cheekes with the teares that fel from her eies, she made him this womanly and wise answer: 'What, Francesco, comest thou home full of woes, or seekest thou at thy returne to make me weepe? Hast thou been long absent, and now bringest thou mee a treatise of discontent? I see thou art penitent, and therefore I am like not to heare what follies are past. It sufficeth for Isabel, that henceforth thou wilt love Isabel, and upon that condition, without any more wordes, welcome to Isabel!' With that she smiled and wept, and, in doing both together, sealed up all her contrarie passions in a kisse."

After this reconciliation, Isabel conducts her husband into an adjoining apartment to a banquet provided by the host of the house in which she dwells. After the neighbours bidden to the feast have well supped, the host tells a tale.

"Francesco, Isabel, and all the rest of the guests applauded this discourse of the pleasant host, and for that it was late in the night, they al rose, and taking their leave of Francesco, departed; he and his wife bidding their host good night, and so going to bed, where we leave them to

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leade the rest of their lives in quiet."—[Query: Are they never to get up again?]

The courteous Palmer having gratified Robert Greene with this lengthy narrative, takes a polite adieu of that gentleman and Mrs. Greene.

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CHAPTER II.

DUCHESS OF NEWCASTLE.

PREVIOUS to the sixteenth century clever women, as far as history tells us, were scarce. The English authoresses, prior to the year 1500, are so few that they might be enumerated in a very brief space. Juliana, the Anchoret of Norwich, wrote her book of revelations in the reign of Edward the Third. The delightful work of the "Prioress of Sopewell Nunnery," which is known to every sportsman of education under the title of "Julian Barnes, her Gentlemans Academie of Hawking, Hunting, Fishing, and Armorie, &c.," was printed in 1481, having been composed some years before. Then there were Margery Kempe, of Lynn, and Margaret, the countess-mother of Henry the Seventh, who, with two or three more, complete the list of talented English ladies who flourished before the year 1500.

In the next century there was no such dearth of female wit. Margaret Roper, that first of blue stockings, and the other daughters of Sir Thomas More, Lady Elizabeth Fane, the Ladies Anne, Margaret, and Jane Seymour, Queen Mary, Mary Queen of Scotland, the mother of Verulam, the wife of Sir Roger Ascham, Lady Russel, Queen Elizabeth, and Katherine Killigrew are amongst those who earned a new respect for their sex. There was a great run on the part of the ladies on literature. Monachi literas nesciunt, et femina libris indulgent;—the clergy cannot read Latin, the ladies can talk it—was the observation of Erasmus. The justly celebrated William Wotton, a native of Suffolk, well versed in the history of this period, affirms,

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that the sixteenth century was more fruitful than any other in learned women. Every young lady of rank affected the jargon of the schools. Little misses of sixteen years could not tear themselves away from their dear Eclogues, and sighed piteously over the mental abasement of their brothers, who cared for hawks and horses more than hexameters. "It was so very modish, that the fair sex seemed to believe that Greek and Latin added to their charms; and that Plato and Aristotle, untranslated, were frequent ornaments to their closet." The artful, roguish minxes: can you not picture to yourself the pains they were at to make the most of their little wealth? How they took care, for fear of false quantities, not to quote their authors in the presence of a man of learned repute; but rattled out line after line of Ovid to their untaught lovers, who, poor fellows, listened with admiration and awe to the hard words!

To us such a state of things is not so astonishing as it was to the few observers of that era, and to the speculative historians of the next century. We know scores of young curates not such good scholars as their sisters, and we find no cause for bewonderment in the fact. But intelligent men, in the days of Erasmus, opened their eyes in amazement at such a strange position of human affairs; and thinkers for ages afterwards exercised their ingenuity in accounting for it. One said it was a consequence of the care Henry the Eighth took in the education of his daughters—the example of royalty was always followed. Another attributed it to the fame Sir Thomas More's daughters achieved by their skill in the learned languages—it was desire for approbation that roused indolent beauties to intellectual exertion. A more sagacious philosopher laid the marvel at the door of the discovery of the art of printing, and the consequent plenty of books.

The accomplishments the ladies of the sixteenth century were proficients in, may be learnt from the following verses,

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which were placed to the memory of Mrs. Elizabeth Lucar in the parish church of St. Michael, in Crooked Lane, London :—

Every Christian heart seeketh to extoll
The glory of the Lord, our onely Redeemer:
Wherefore Dame Fame must needs inroll
Paul Withypoll his childe, by love and nature,
Elizabeth, the wife of Emanuel Lucar,
In whom was declared the goodness of the Lord,
With many high vertues, which truely I will record.

She wrought all needle-works that women exercise,
With pen, frame, or stoole, all pictures artificial,
Curious knots, or trailes, what fancy could devise,
Beasts, birds, or flowers, even as things natural;
Three manner hands could she write them faire all,
To speak of Algorism, or accounts in every fashion,
Of women, few like (I think) in all this nation.

Dame Cunning her gave a gift right excellent,
The goodly practice of her science musical,
In divers tongues to sing, and play with instrument,
Both vial and lute, and also virginall;
Not only upon one, but excellent in all.
For all other vertues belonging to nature,
God her appointed a very perfect creature.

Latine and Spanish, and also Italian,
She spake, writ, and read with perfect utterance;
And for English, she the garland wan,
In Dame Prudence schoole, by Graces purveyance,
Which clothed her with virtues from naked ignorance;
Reading the Scriptures, to judge light from darke,
Directing her faith to Christ, the only marke.

The said Elizabeth, deceased the 29th day of October, A.D., 1537, of yeeres not fully 27. This stone and all hereon contained, made at the charge of the said Emanuel, Merchant-Taylor.

Clearly she was too clever to live!

The movement continued. The pen of the Countess of Lincoln produced that true-womanly work, "The Countesse of Lincolne's Nurserie." Lady Eleanor Davies was born in the latter part of Elizabeth's reign, and Anne, Countess of Pembroke, about the year 1589. The pious Elizabeth Walker first saw the light in 1623; and towards

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the end of King James's reign, just before a time which it is the fashion now to call remarkable for the mean instruction given its women, came Margaret, the notorious Duchess of Newcastle, whom the *truthful* Dryden declared to "be a lady whom our age may justly equal with the Sappho of the Greeks, or the Sulpitia of the Romans."

Ballard, in his famous and interesting, but inaccurate, "Memoirs of Ladies," states that Margaret, the Duchess of Newcastle, was a daughter of Sir Charles Lucas; but in saying so he is guilty of an error into which he would never have fallen had he read the best of the noble lady's books. The unfortunate Sir Charles Lucas was one of her brothers. She mentions him frequently in her writings; and in her autobiography, entitled "A true Relation of my Birth, Breeding, and Life," she informs us particularly that her father had no title, although his estate might easily have purchased one, and she speaks of herself as "daughter to one Master Lucas, of St. John's, neer Colchester, in Essex." It is interesting to see the fruits of Ballard's mistake. Sir Walter Scott and numerous biographers of great merit have adopted it.

The family of Lucas was one of high repute and considerable wealth in the counties of Essex and Suffolk. Thomas Lucas, the father of the Duchess of Newcastle, was the representative of his house in the reign of Elisabeth, who banished him her kingdoms for having killed in a duel a Mr. Brooks, a relation, probably a brother, of her favoured Lord Cobham. He was in exile as long as that queen lived, but on the accession of James the First, who "graciously gave him his pardon," he returned to his native country, "wherein he lived happily, and died peaceably, leaving a wife and eight children—three sons, and five daughters." Of these children, Margaret, the future duchess, was the youngest, being only an infant when her father died.

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The widow of Thomas Lucas was a woman of rare virtue and charms. She conducted the business of her children's estate with energy and judgment, and was not only an indulgent but a good mother. The Duchess, after speaking of the disasters the Civil Wars brought on her family, and the great difficulties her mother had to contend with, goes on to say, "but in such misfortune my mother was of an heroick spirit, in suffering patiently where there is no remedy, or to be industrious where she thought she could help: she was of a grave behaviour, and had such a majestick grandeur, as it were, continually hung about her, that it would strike a kind of awe to the beholders, and command respect from the rudest; I mean the rudest of civilized people; I mean not such barbarous people as plundered her and used her cruelly, for they would have pulled God out of Heaven, had they had power, as they did royaltie out of his throne; also her beauty was beyond the ruin of time, for she had a well-favoured loveliness in her face, a pleasing sweetness in her countenance, and a well-tempered complexion, as neither too red, nor too pale, even to her dying hour; although in years, and by her dying, one might think death was enamoured with her, for he embraced her in a sleep, and so gently, as if he were afraid to hurt her; also she was an affectionate mother, breeding her children with a most industrious care, and tender love; and having eight children, three sons and five daughters, there was not any one crooked, or any ways deformed, neither were they of a dwarfish, or of a giant-like stature, but every ways proportionable, likewise well-featured, cleer complexions, brown hairs, but some lighter than others, plain speeches, tunable voices—I mean not so much to sing as in speaking, as not stuttering, nor wharling in the throat, or speaking through the nose, or hoarsely, unless they had a cold, or squeakingly."

It was a gladsome home under that best of mothers. "As for our garments, my mother did not only delight to

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see us neat and cleanly, fine and gay, but rich and costly; maintaining us to the height of her estate, but not beyond it; for we were so far from being in debt before these wars, as we were rather before hand with the world * * * 'Tis true, my mother might have increased her daughters' portions by a thrifty sparing, yet she chose to bestow it on our breeding, honest pleasures, and harmless delights, out of an opinion, that if she bred us with needy necessitie, it might chance to create in us sharking qualities, mean thoughts, and base actions, which she knew my father as well as herself did abhor; likewise we were bred tenderly, for my mother naturally did strive to please and delight her children, not to cross or torment them, terrifying them with threats, or lashing them with slavish whips; but instead of threats, reason was used to persuade us, and instead of lashes, the deformities of vice were discovered, and the graces and vertues were presented unto us; also we were bred with respectfull attendance, every one being severally waited upon, and all her servants in generall used the same respect to her children (even those that were very young) as they did to herself, for she suffered not her servants either to be rude before us, or to domineer over us, which all vulgar servants are apt, and oftimes which some have leave to do; likewise she never suffered the vulgar serving men to be in the nursery amongst the nurse-maids, lest their rude love-making might speak unhandsome words in the presence of her children. * * *

"As for tutors, although we had for all sorts of virtuosus, as singing, dancing, playing on musick, reading, writing, working, and the like, yet we were not kept strictly thereto, they were rather for formalitie than benefit, for my mother cared not so much for our dancing and fiddling, singing and prating of severall languages, as that we should be bred vertuously, modestly, civilly, honourably, and on honest principles."

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When the children grew up, and entered London life most of them as married people, "their customes were in winter time to go sometimes to plays, or to ride in their coaches about the streets to see the concourse and recourse of the people; in the spring time to visit the Spring Garden, Hide-park, and the like places; and sometimes they would have musick, and sup in barges upon the water."

Margaret joined the court at Oxford, and became a maid of honour to Henrietta Maria. Her brothers and sisters disapproved the step, because she was painfully bashful and unaccustomed to society. "For though they knew I would not behave myself to their, or my own dishonour, yet they thought I might to my disadvantage, being inexperienced in the world." Her timidity did not prevent her beauty working her high fortune at the court in which she remained almost two years, until she was married. "For my Lord, the Marquis of Newcastle, did approve of those bashful fears which many condemned, and would choose such a wife as he might bring to his own humours, and not such an one as was wedded to self-conceit, or one that had been tempered to the humours of another, for which he wooed me for his wife; and though I did dread marriage and shunn'd men's companies, as much as I could, yet I could not, nor had not the power to refuse him, and he was the only person I ever was in love with; neither was I ashamed to own it, but gloried therein, for it was not a amourous love; neither could title, wealth, power, or person entice me to love; but my love was honest and honourable being placed upon merit, which affection joy'd at the fame of his worth, pleased with delight in his wit, proud of the respects he used to me, and triumphing in the affections he profest for me, which affections he hath confirmed to me by a deed of time, seal'd by constancy, and assigned by the unalterable decree of his promise, which makes me happy in despight of fortunes and frowns." And men have dar

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to ridicule such a woman as this, and treat her memory with contempt, because she was guilty of some absurdities!

Her love for her husband remained unabated to her dying day. She was his joy and chief solace during his long exile; she smiled on him in his broken fortunes, and looking at those smiles he could not murmur at the rebels for having plundered him of the far greater portion of his wealth, since Heaven had bestowed on him so precious a companion. There was no make-belief in their devotion to each other; it was genuine and unforced. She had a noble heart and her mother's beauty, and he merited the possession of them.

There have been many who have tried to sneer away the excellence of this nobleman; but his is a fame which can afford to meet with detraction. His services to the Stuarts none are ignorant of; he fought bravely for them in the field, he shared their exile, he lost enormous wealth in their cause; and he remained true to them after the restoration, when they slighted him and rewarded him with poverty and a dukedom! Titles and wealth were not, in those days, conferred together on men of honour! William Cavendish, the first Duke of Newcastle, was an ornament to his family, and not unworthy his connection with Suffolk, to which county the Cavendishes originally belonged, and from a parish in which county they take their honourable name. He was the model cavalier, with all the virtues and none—or almost none—of their failings—courageous, and yet gentle. His temper was proof even against an unruly horse: "I rarely beat them, or punish them with either rod or spur, but when I meet with a great resistance, and that rarely." "His bearing was courtly, easy without formality, and yet had something of grandeur in it that caused an awful respect to him." His demeanour to others, especially to those beneath him in rank, was kind and considerate as a really great man's ever is. "To the meanest person he would put off his hat, and suffer everybody to speak to him." His

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costume was scrupulously neat and cleanly, but unostentatious. "In his diet he was so sparing and temperate, that he never ate nor drank beyond his set proportion, so as to satisfie only his natural appetite. He made but one meal a-day, at which he drank two glasses of small beer, one about the beginning, the other at the end thereof, and a little glass of sack in the middle of his dinner, which glass of sack he also used in the morning for his breakfast, with a morsel of bread. His supper consisted of an egg, and a draught of small beer; and by this temperance he found himself very healthful at the age of seventy-three." His recreations were riding and training his splendid horses, the exercise of weapons, the practice of music, and the study of poetry and architecture.

If he had a great blemish, it was a too passionate fondness for women, but even this in him was pardoned by his generous wife. "In short," she says, "I know him not addicted to any manner of vice, except that he has been a great lover and admirer of the female sex; which, whether it be so great a crime as to condemn him for it, I'le leave to the judgment of young gallants and beautiful ladies." The prisoner, it is needless to say, was acquitted.

The works he has left, show him to have been a man of no ordinary capacity, though Clarendon said he was fitter to break Pegasus for a ménage, than to mount him on the steeps of Parnassus. His comedies are sprightly and pleasant, showing a lively appreciation of character, and no mean power of delineating it. Without a doubt they are far superior to the less happy productions of the best writers of that time Of his books on horses it is not easy to speak with too great praise. Every line of them is that of a practical man. He examines all previous writers on equestrian matters—Italian authors, French, Spanish, and English—laughs at their blunders, and concludes by begging every man to try his horses before buying. A generous indigna-

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tion breaks from him at cruelty to dumb animals, which is scarcely more vehement than his scorn for the pedants of the schools who profess a contempt for his favourite brute. "What makes scholasticks degrade horses so much proceeds (I believe) from nothing else but the small knowledge they have of them, and from a persuasion that they themselves know everything. They fancy they talk pertinently about them, whereas they know no more than they learn by riding a hackney horse from the University to London and back again." Many other fine qualities are unintentionally revealed in the pages. In a frank, ingenuous manner, altogether free from vanity, he mentions the compliments paid him on his horsemanship. "The Marquess of Carasena was so civilly anxious to see me ride, that he was pleased to say, it would be a great satisfaction to him to see me on horseback, though the horse should but walk." Charles the Second was his pupil, and was placed by him on the first horse he mounted. Don John of Austria and the Dukes of York and Gloucester were his guests, and he lets you know it—but with highbred simplicity, not with a mean adoration of the great. The work on horses and horsemanship is illustrated with pictures of a superior style of art. In one of them Monseigneur le Marquis appears in a triumphal car drawn by centaurs, and surrounded by horses on their knees, paying homage to their great king. In another, Monseigneur le Marquis is leaping on his steed bang up into the clouds, and the gods, clustering together in their celestial abode, look with approbation at such a model of chivalry as Monseigneur le Marquis. Without doubt there is no slight vanity on the part of the noble equestrian displayed in these drawings; but then was he not 'best' in his art? and if best, why should he not rejoice in his power, and wish men to know it?

But had he no other claim to applause, his earnest love for his wife, and his being the object of such an ennobling

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love as hers would entitle him to it. She did not hesitate to declare him the equal of Cæsar (Julius) in every thing but good luck. Neither want of success, nor the evil tongues of his enemies, could lessen him in her esteem. "Although Nature," she writes, "had favoured my lord and endued him with the best qualities and perfections she could inspire into his soul, yet fortune hath ever been such an inveterate enemy to him, that she invented all the spight and malice against him that lay in her power: and, notwithstanding his prudent counsels and designs, cast such obstructions in his way, that he seldom proved successful, but where he acted in person. And since I am not ignorant that this unjust and partial age is apt to suppress the worth of meritorious persons, and that many will endeavour to observe my lords noble actions and fame, by casting unjust aspersions upon, and laying (either out of ignorance or malice), Fortunes envy to his charge, I have purposed to represent these obstructions which conspired to render his good intentions and endeavours ineffectual." This is something like faith! He was not less generous to her. Some one said she was not the originator of the works that went in the world under her name. The Duke came to her defence, with "an epistle to justifie the Lady Newcastle, and truth against falsehood; laying those false and malicious aspersions of her, that she was not authour of her books," in which he said, "This ladie's philosophy is excellent, and will be thought so hereafter; and, the truth is, that it was wholy and onely wrought out of her own brain, as there are many witnesses, by the several sheets that she sent daily to be writ fair for the presse. As for her poems, where are the exceptions to these? Marry, they misse sometimes in the numbers and in the rimes. It is well known by the copies, that those faults lie most upon the corrector and the printer. But put the case, there might be some slips in that kinde: is all the book damned for it? No mercy, gentlemen?

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When, for the numbers, every schoole-boy can make them on his fingers; and for the rimes, Fenner would have put down Ben Johnson; and yet, neither the boy or Fenner so good poets. No; it is neither of those either makes or condemns a poet; it is new-born and creating phancies that glorifies a poet; and in her book of poems, I am sure there is excellent and new phancies as have not been writ by any, and that it was onely writ by her, is the greatest truth in the world. * * * As for the book of her *Philosophical Opision*, there is not any one thing in the whole book that is not absolutely spun out by her tedious phancy; and if you will lay by a little passion against writors, you will like it, and the best of anything she has writ; therefore, read it once or twice, not with malice, to finde a little fault, but with judgement to like what is good.

"Truely I cannot beleeve so unworthily of any scholar (honouring them so much as we both do), that they should envie this ladie; or should have so much malice or emulation, to cast such false aspersions on her that she did not write those books that go forth in her name." The Duke's original abilities must not be condemned as mean from this letter, for it was penned by him when he was more than three score years and ten of age. He was considerably older than the Duchess Margaret, who was his second wife.

Whether a profound scholar, or any English thinker, posterior to Bacon, would be likely to appropriate the Duchess's productions, the reader may form his opinion from the following extracts. One of her many folio volumes bearing the impressive title of "Grounds of Natural Philosophy," is a collection of little chapters on things in general, from "the clouds" to "corns on the feet." The following chapter on "Weakness," is a fair sample of the lady's *Philosophical Conceits*, as she called them:—

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"CHAPTER V.

"OF WEAKNESS.

"THERE are many sorts of weakness; some weakness proceeds from age, others, through want of food; others, are occasioned by oppression; others, by disorders and irregularities: and so many other sorts, that it would be too tedious to repeat them, could I know them; but such sorts of weakness as human creatures are subject to, after some disease or sickness, are somewhat like weariness after a laborious or over-hard action; as, when a man hath run fast, or laboured hard, he fetches his breath short and thick; and as most of the sensitive actions are by degrees, so is a returning to health after sickness; but all irregularities are laborious."

The above is the entire chapter, beginning, end, and middle: we hope the reader is the wiser for it.

From "the World's Olio," another large folio, in which things in general are philosophically conceited, we give the following extract from a chapter, headed "Men ought not to strive for superiority with women." In it the Duchess gives evidence of a profound knowledge of her sex.

"He is either a fool or a coward that strives for the preheminency with a woman; a coward, because he domineers over weakness; a fool, to dispute with ignorance. For men should use women as nurses do children, strive to please them, and yield to them in all things but what will do them harm; as not to suffer them to degrade themselves of their honours by their wantoness, or to spend their estate by their vanity, or destroy their health by ill orders; but strive to delight them, by giving them liberty in all honourable and honest recreations, in moderate expenses and harmless vanities."

Again—

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"OF THE DISSEMBLING OF WOMEN.

"All women are a kind of mountebanks: for they would make the world believe they are better than they are; and they do all they can to draw company; and their allurements is their dressing, singing, dancing, painting, and the like; and when men are cacht, they laugh to see what fools they are to be taken with such toyes; for woman's ends are only to make men profess, protest, lye, and forsweare themselves in the admiration of them; for a woman's only delight is to be flattered of men; for they care not whether they love truly, or speak falsely, so they profess honestly."

Was it indeed so? The Duchess had a very low estimate of her sex, and yet she was a kindly woman, and did not feel it her mission to lash the vices of the age.

The reader has had good specimens of the Duchess's literary style, and in that style she wrote volumes upon volumes. *Conceits* rose from her brain like vapours from a marsh in the hot rays of early summer. She was always conceiving, hard and sharp. She kept a bevy of maidens of honour, who were obliged, at all hours of the night, to attend the summons of her bell with a light and materials, "to register her Grace's conceptions." John Rolleston, also, the Duke's secretary, was made to lie in a truckle-bed in a closet within her Grace's bed-chamber, and when she called out, "John, I conceive," poor John had to get up and commit to writing the offspring of his mistress's reveries. She seldom or never revised the copies of her works, "lest it should disturb her following conceptions."

Though we have no great reverence for the literary reputation of this lady, she had an abundance of praise during her life. The Illustrissima Domina, Excellentissima Dux, Illustrissima Princeps, Excellentissima Domina, Illustrissima Marchionissa, Illustrissima Heroina, Eminentissima

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Princeps, Illustrissimaque Princeps, had letters of congratulation written to her in the most superb Latin, from philosophers of every European nation, declaring her the most wonderful woman that had ever breathed. The Rector Magnificus of the University of Leyden, addressing her, said, "Princeps ingenii, Princeps terrarum, Princeps feminini sexus merito diceris." The Vice-Chancellor and Senate of Cambridge made this speech:—"Nondum (quod scimus) annalibus excidere, neque certe per nos unquam excident erudita nomina, Aspasia Pereclis, Odenati Zenobia, Polla Lucani, Boethii Rusticiana; quæ tamen, si reviviscerent hodie, adeo tecum (Inclyta Dux) de eruditionis palma non contenderent, at famæ tuæ potius ancillantes, solam Margaretam, consummatissimam Principem et agnoscerent, et posito genu certatim adorarent." If this be not glory, what is?

Faugh! thank God, servility is not so rife in these days! Oxford and Cambridge did not use such language to the Countess of Blessington!

While all this adulation was going on in the lady's presence, there were sneers and laughter enough where she was absent. Sir Walter Scott, in one of the best scenes in "Peveril of the Peak," makes Charles the Second say to an attendant, when the Duchess of Newcastle is supposed to be waiting admittance in an ante-chamber—"In the name of madness, then, let us admit her. Her Grace is an entire rareeshow in her person, a universal masquerade; indeed, a sort of private Bedlam hospital; her whole ideas being like so many patients crazed upon the subjects of love and literature, who act nothing in their vagaries, save Minerva, Venus and the Nine Muses." It was a good touch that of Sir Walter's, and better, we are inclined to think, than he meant it to be, in making Charles jest coarsely at the expense of a lady whose family and whose husband's family, had spilt their treasures and blood in his service, when his fortunes were most desolate.

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Besides nineteen plays, innumerable philosophical essays, letters, orations, and poems, the Duchess of Newcastle produced some "tales in prose," which are amongst our earliest novels of English manufacture.

As a specimen, we transcribe

"THE CONVERTS IN MARRIAGE.

"There were four young gentlewomen whose fathers were near neighbours to each other, whereupon there grew up an acquaintance, and so a society.

"The first was reserved and coy.

"The second was bold and ranting.

"The third was merry and gay.

"The fourth was peevish and spightful.

"She that was reserved and coy, was generous and ambitious.

"She that was bold and ranting, was covetous and wanton.

"She that was merry and gay, was vain and phantastical.

"She that was peevish and spightful, was cross and unconstant.

"It chanced the four fathers were offered four husbands for their four daughters all at one time, and, by reason they had good estates, they caused their daughters to marry.

"The husband that was to marry the first lady was covetous, miserable, and timerous, as all miserable, covetous, persons, for the most part are, fearfull; but being very rich, the father to this lady forced her to marry him.

"And he that was to marry the second lady was temperate, prudent, and chaste.

"And he that was to marry the third lady was melancholy, solitary, and studious.

"And he that was to marry the fourth lady was cholerick and impatient.

"And after they had been marryed some time, the covetous and timerous man became hospitable, bountifull, valiant, and aspiring, doing high and noble deeds.

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"And she that was bold and wanton became chaste, sober, and obedient.

"And he that was melancholy became sociable, conversible, and pleasant, and she thrifty and staid.

"But he that was cholerick and impatient, who married her that was peevish and spightful, did live like dogs and cats, spit, scrawl, scratch, and bite, insomuch that they were forced to part; for, being both faulty, they could not live happily, because they could never agree: for errours and faults multiply being joined together, &c."

The foregoing is the entire story. The reader might think from the concluding &c., that there was more in the original, but there is not; the introduction, plot, denouement, moral conclusion, and the &c., have been copied as the authoress had them printed.

The Duchess of Newcastle died in the year 1673, and was buried in Westminster Abbey, where a monument, erected to her memory, has this inscription:—

"Here lies the Lord Duke of Newcastle, and his Duchess, his second wife, by whom he had no issue; Her name was Margaret Lucas, youngest sister to the Lord Lucas of Colchester, a noble family; for all the brothers were valiant, and all the sisters virtuous. This Duchess was a wise, witty, and learned lady, which her many books do well testifie: she was a most virtuous and loving, and careful wife, and was with her Lord all the time of his banishment and miseries; and when she came home, never parted with him in his solitary retirements."

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CHAPTER III.

MRS. BEHN.

Few English women, who have devoted themselves to literature as a vocation, have achieved a greater success than did Mrs. Behn in her day. She gained a liberal share of the applause of the wits of her age, and a yet larger share of their attention; she wrote poems that were allowed to be good: she was the authoress of plays which the town flocked to see acted; Charles the Second was fascinated by her powers of conversation and her beauty; Dryden complimented her on her powers of versification; and she wrote novels which every one read, and continued to read for generations after her death; and one (at least) of which was translated into the French language, and published at Amsterdam, when she had been in the grave more than half a century. And yet, we doubt not, many of our readers have never heard her name till now.

Aphra, Aphara, Apharra, or Afra (for the name is to be found spelt in all four ways) Behn was a daughter of a gentleman of good family. Her maiden name was Johnson; and Canterbury has the honour of being her birth-place—but the year of her birth is unknown. The various biographers, who have briefly sketched her life, concur in placing her birth at the close of the reign of Charles the First; it certainly was not earlier.

Her father was a friend of Francis, fourth Lord Willoughby, of Parham, in the county of Suffolk, to which nobleman, in conjunction with Laurence Hyde, second son of Edward, Earl of Clarendon, Charles the Second gave (with the

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liberality that characterized European monarchs of those days) the colony of Surinam. The interest of Lord Willoughby secured the post of Lieutenant-General of Surinam and thirty-six West Indian isles for his friend Johnson, who immediately quitted England for the New World, taking with him his wife and children. Aphara was then quite a child—too young, her female biographer and friend assures us, to have known the passion of love. But her rare beauty had, even in those tender years, gained her many passionate admirers, and her quickness of intellect was the wonder and amusement of all her acquaintance.

The lieutenant-general was fated not to reap any of the advantages of his newly-acquired appointment. He died on board ship, during his passage to America. His patron, also, was doomed to find his death at sea, but in a more calamitous manner. Francis, Lord Willoughby, was lost in a violent hurricane, which destroyed eleven ships, in the year 1666. Pepys mentions this catastrophe, in a letter to Lord Brouncker, with official brevity and coolness. "But perhaps our ill, but confirmed, tidings from the Barbadoes may not have reached you yet, it coming but yesterday; viz., that about eleven ships, whereof two of the king's, the Hope and Coventry, going thence with men to attack St. Christopher's, were seized by a violent hurricane and all sunk—two only of the thirteen escaping, and those with the loss of masts, &c. My Lord Willoughby himself is involved in the disaster, and I think two ships thrown upon an island of the French, and so all the men, to 500, became their prisoners."

When Aphara, with her widowed mother, and her brothers and sisters, gained the *terra firma* of Surinam, they took possession of a house that appears to have stood somewhere on the Parham estate, and which was placed at their disposal. The scene was novel, and had plenty to interest them. "As soon as I came into the country the

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best house in it was presented to me, called St. John's Hill." Aphara afterwards wrote in her novel of *Oroonoko* —"It stood on a vast rock of white marble, at the foot of which the river ran a vast depth down, and not to be descended on that side; the little waves, still dashing and washing the foot of this rock, made the softest murmurs and purlings in the world; and the opposite bank was adorned with such vast quantities of different flowers eternally blowing, and every day and hour new, fenced behind 'em with lofty trees, of a thousand rare forms and colours, that the prospect was the most ravishing that sands can create. On the edge of this white rock, towards the river, was a walk or grove of orange and lemon trees, about half the length of the mall here: whose flowery fruit-bearing branches met at the top, and hindered the sun, whose rays are very fierce there, from entering a beam into the grove; and the cool air that came from the river made it not only fit to entertain people in, at all the hottest hours of the day, but refreshed the sweetest blossoms, and made it always sweet and charming; and, sure, the whole globe of the world cannot show so delightful a place as this grove was; not all the gardens of boasted Italy can produce a shade to outvie this, which Nature had joined with Art to render so exceeding fine; and 'tis a marvel to see how such vast trees, as big as English oaks, can take footing in so solid a rock, and in so little earth as covered that rock. But all things by nature there are delightful and wonderful."

In another place, in the same novel, she writes of the country—"Though in a word I must say thus much of it; that certainly had his late Majesty of sacred memory but seen and known what a vast and charming world he had been master of in that continent, he would never have parted so easily with it to the Dutch. 'Tis a continent, whose vast extent was never yet known, and may contain more noble earth than all the universe besides; for, they

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say, it reaches from the east to the west one way as far as China, and another to Peru. It affords all things both for beauty and use; 'tis there eternal spring, always the very months of April, May, and June; the shades are perpetual, the trees bearing at once all degrees of leaves and fruit, from blooming buds to ripe autumn; groves of oranges, lemons, citrons, figs, nutmegs, and noble aromaticks, continually bearing their fragrancies. The trees appearing all like nosegays adorned with flowers of different kinds, some are all white, some purple, some scarlet, some blue, some yellow; bearing at the same time ripe fruit, and blooming young, or producing every day new. The very wood of all these trees has an intrinsic value above common timber; for they are, when cut, of different colours, glorious to behold, and bear a price considerable, to inlay withal. Besides this, they yield rich balm and gums; so that we make our candles of such a rich aromatick substance, as does not only give a sufficient light, but, as they burn, they cast their fumes all about. Cedar is the common firing, and all the houses are built with it. The very meat we eat, when set on the table, if it be native, I mean of the country, perfumes the whole room; especially a little beast called an armadilly, a thing which I can liken to nothing so well as a rhinoceros; 'tis all in white armour, so jointed, that it moves as well in it as if it had nothing on; this beast is about the bigness of a pig of six weeks old." The reader will admit that Aphara knew well how to place the wonders of her travels before the gaping Londoners!

The young girl, while she was in America, had very delicate health, and was subject to fits of melancholy and sudden fainting. But indisposition did not restrain her from exerting herself in a manner that would astonish young ladies of the present day. She joined in the fierce sport of tiger-hunting; and made expeditions far up the country, for the purpose of becoming acquainted with the native

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tribes. On one occasion she was introduced to the war-captains of a tribe, whose appearance struck her. "For my part, I took 'em for hobgoblins and fiends, rather than men; but however their shapes appeared, their souls were very humane and noble; but some wanted their noses, some their lips, some their ears, and others cut through each cheek with long slashes, through which their teeth appeared; they had several other formidable wounds and scars, or rather dismemberings. Cæsar was marvelling as much at their faces, wondering how they should all be so wounded in war; he was impatient to know how they came by those frightful marks of rage and malice, rather than wounds got in noble battle. They told us by our interpreter, that when any war was waging, two men, chosen out by some old captain whose fighting was past, and who could only teach the theory of war, were to stand in competition for the generalship, or great war-captain; and being brought before the old judges now past labour, they were asked, what they dare do, to show they were worthy to lead an army. When he who is first asked, making no reply, cuts off his nose, and throws it contemptibly on the ground; and the other does something to himself that he thinks surpasses him, and perhaps deprives himself of lips and an eye; so they slash on till one gives out, and many have died *in this debate.*" There was no routine system, it would appear, in the war-offices of that people.

The Cæsar, who is mentioned in the preceding extract from *Oroonoko*, was a negro slave on Lord Willoughby's estate, for whom Aphara had conceived a violent passion. He had been a powerful prince and warrior in Africa, and was known and feared as "the brave Oroonoko." Deprived of his liberty by an English slave-merchant, who was an extreme example of the villany of the English slave-merchants of that period, the Prince Oroonoko was conveyed to Surinam; and there sold to Lord Willoughby's agent. The

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misfortunes of this poor fellow aroused the sympathies of the generous Aphara, who exerted herself to her utmost to gain his liberty, and was instrumental in bringing about his marriage with an old love, Imoinda, a beautiful captive, who had been taken from his embraces in Africa, and sent as a slave to South America, luckily to the same colony her lover was to visit in wretched servitude. The end of Oroonoko was heart-rending. He came into contention with the authorities of the colony, and was by them flogged once and again, roasted till he was nearly dead, and then, before life was extinct, was brutally dismembered. Aphara, luckily, did not witness her poor friend's last sufferings, but her mother and sister were present during the perpetration of the atrocity, ineffectually endeavouring to prevent the intentions of Oroonoko's merciless persecutors being carried into effect.

On the return of Mrs. Johnson and her children to England, Aphara made her appearance at court, and told Charles the Second the story of her adventures. She assured him that America contained snakes *three score yards long*, and I know not what else. The merry monarch was so delighted with her intelligence, and so deeply affected with the narration of Oroonoko's wrongs, that he requested her to publish her account for the benefit of the world. In obedience to the royal request, she wrote and in due time published "*The History* of Oroonoko; or, the Royal Slave." This is by far the best of her novels,—full of feeling and generosity, because the affections of the writer were warmly interested in the subject of her story. It had a great success—perhaps a greater for that day than Mrs. Stowe's famous "Uncle Tom's Cabin." The world went mad on the enormities of slavery. There doubtless would have been public meetings of ladies on the question, had it then been the custom for ladies to hold parliaments on such matters. Southerne put the great novel on the stage.

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His tragedy, "Oroonoko"—which is nothing more than a dramatic version of Aphara's novel, and in some respects is not worthy of its original—was received by the play-goers with loud applause. Its author was amply rewarded, as indeed he was for nearly all his literary undertakings, for he once obtained no less a sum than £700 for a play.

A great literary authority has said that the memory of Southerne should be held sacred, because he was the first English writer who used his pen to expose the injustice and iniquity of the slave-trade. This remark, though made by a justly celebrated man, is erroneous, and does wrong to more than one author besides Aphara Behn.

To those who maintain that humanity moves in a circle, ever in action, but never progressing, it may cause the delight of a cynical sneer to know, that nearly two hundred years ago the favourite work of light literature was a "nigger novel."

Immediately Aphara returned to England, she was besieged by lovers of all degrees in rank and age. Her selection was prudent; Mr. Behn, a rich London merchant, of Dutch extraction, was the suitor so fortunate as to win her. History does not say much of this man, but it would appear that he did not live long after their marriage, for there is good reason to suppose that he died before the close of the year 1666.

In that year Aphara was employed by the king in an important service. Our conflict with the Dutch was then at a most interesting crisis, and Aphara was sent abroad to act as a spy on the enemy's movements. Charles himself was the person who named her as the fittest possible agent for such a mission. She prudently fixed her head-quarters at Antwerp, and from that city sent a summons to a former admirer, whom she speaks of as Vander Albert, to hasten and gladden her with a sight of his countenance. Vander Albert was a merchant of Utrecht, of considerable reputa-

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tion and influence in Holland—so much so, that important state secrets were confided to his keeping. Aphara's invitation was not despised; her old admirer (a handsome fellow, thirty-two years of age), quickly appeared before her, and was wrought into an ecstasy of bliss by hearing her hint she would one day marry him if he only gave satisfactory proofs of his love. Without much parleying he agreed to play his country false, and to communicate to his mistress the plans of De Witt and De Ruyter. He kept his word: and before long apprised Aphara that an expedition was in contemplation to sail up the Thames and destroy the English shipping. Quickly was this news conveyed to London; but the ministers were incredulous; and Aphara's note was only laughed at, and shown with expressions of derision to some who especially ought not to have seen it. Those clever statesmen! Had they only paid proper attention to a woman's words, the nation might have been saved the humiliation which was consummated 'while Charles was feasting with the ladies of the seraglio, and was amusing himself with hunting a moth about the supper-room.' Had they only acted with common prudence, Rochester might never have had occasion to write:—

"Mists, storms, short victuals, adverse winds,
And once the navies' wise Division,
Defeated Charles his best Designs,
Till he became his Foes' Derision.
But he had swinged the Dutch at Chattam,
Had he had ships but to come at 'em."

Not meeting with the respect due to her from the government at home, Aphara no longer troubled herself about political affairs, but during the remainder of her stay at Antwerp devoted herself to the pleasures of society. The beautiful Englishwoman, mirthful (sometimes boisterously so), with quick wit, rich and free with her money, a poetess and a travelled personage, soon became the rage of the place.

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Lovers flocked round her by scores: and good fun she made of the whole of them. One old gentleman, a rich merchant, fat, short-winded, unwieldy, and pompous—a caricature of Dutch awkwardness and absurdity—a friend of Vander Albert, implored her to marry him. The letter in which he made this offer is worth the trouble of perusal. The magnificence of thought and diction displayed in this effusion must be accounted for by the fact, that the writer was impressed with the belief that so great a genius as Mrs. Behn would not be gratified by any ordinary epistle.

"Most Transcendent Charmer,

"I have strove often to tell you the tempest of my heart, and with my own mouth scale the walls of your affections; but terrified with the strength of your fortifications, I concluded to make more regular approaches; and first attack you at a farther distance, and try first what a bombardment of letters would do; whether these carcasses of love, thrown into the sconces of your eyes, would break into the midst of your breast, beat down the court of guard of your aversion, and blow up the magazine of your cruelty, that you might be brought to a capitulation and yield upon reasonable terms. Believe me, I love thee more than money; for indeed thou art more beautiful than the ore of Guinea. * * * Oh! thou art beautiful in every part, as a goodly ship under sail from the Indies; thy hair is like her flowing pennons, as she enters the harbour, and thy forehead bold and fair as her prow; thy eyes are bright and terrible as her guns; thy nose like a rudder that steers my desires; thy mouth like a well-wrought mortar whence the granadoes of thy tongue are shot into the gun-room of my heart and shatter it to pieces; thy teeth are the grappling-irons that fasten me to my ruin, and of which I would wish to get clear in vain; thy neck is curious and small like the very top-mast head, beneath which thy lovely bosom swells itself like the main-sail before the wind. * * * * Oh that I could once see thy keel above water! And is it not a pity that so spruce a ship should be unmanned, should lie in the harbour for want of her crew? Ah! let me be the pilot to steer her by the Cape of Good Hope for the Indies of Love. But oh! fair Englishwoman! thou art a fire-ship gilded and sumptuous without, and driven before the wind to set me on fire; for thy eyes indeed are, like that, destructive, though like brandy bewitching; alas! they have grappled my heart, my forecastle's on fire, my upper decks are consumed, and nothing but the water of despair keeps the very hulk from combustion; so you have left it only in my choice to drown or burn. Oh! for pity's sake take some pity, for thy compassion is more desirable than a strong gale, when we have got to the windward of a Sally-man; your eyes, I say again and again, like a chain-shot, have brought down the main-mast of my resolution by the board, cut all the rigging of my discretion and interest, blown up the

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powder-room of my affections, and shattered all the hulk of my bosom; so that without the planks of your pity, I must inevitably sink to the bottom. This is the deplorable condition, transcendant beauty! of your undone vassal,

"VAN BRUIN."

Positively Aphara *did not capitulate!* She never married again. One rich merchant had given her enough of matrimony.

On quitting Antwerp, Aphara went to Ostend; and from that place she proceeded to Dunkirk, where she took ship for England. One of her fellow-passengers was Sir Bernard Gascoign. "Sir Bernard had brought with him from Italy several admirable telescopes and prospective glasses; and looking through one of them, when the day was very calm and clear, espied a strange apparition floating on the water, was also seen by all in their turn that looked through it; which made them conclude that they were painted glasses that were put at the ends, on purpose to surprise and amaze them that looked through 'em; till after having taken 'em out, rubb'd and put 'em in again, they found the same thing floating toward the ship, and which was now come so near as to be within view without a glass. * * * The figure was this, a four-square floor of various coloured marble, from which ascended rows of fluted and twisted pillars, embossed round with climbing vines and flowers, and waving streamers, that received an easy motion in the air; upon the pillars a hundred little cupids clambered with fluttering wings. This strange pageant came almost near enough for one to step out of the ship into it before it vanished; after which, and a short calm, followed so violent a storm, that having driven the ship upon the coasts, she split in sight of land; but the people, by the help of the inhabitants and boats from shore, were all saved; and our *Astrea* arrived safe, though tired, to London from a voyage that gained her more reputation than profit." The marvel of the "great

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sea-serpent" sinks into insignificance when compared with this "strange apparition."

Perhaps the reader wonders what may be the meaning of Astrea in the above passage. It was Aphara Behn's *nom de plume*. It was then much more the fashion, even than now, for ladies stepping out of the usual path and becoming authors or wits to shroud themselves under an assumed name. Orinda, Rosania, Leucasia, Ardelia, and scores of like elegant appellations, including the ever famous Stella and Vanessa, are as familiar to our ears as Currer Bell.

With the exception of the Duchess of Newcastle, England had never seen so voluminous a female writer as Astrea.—A great lyric Tom-Moorish sort of poem, called "A Voyage to the Island of Love," and innumerable smaller effusions of a like kind—congratulatory odes to royal personages on the birth or anticipated birth of babies—novels, some taken straight from the French without a profession of alteration, and some the productions of Scarrow and other French writers of that date served up with slightly different and perchance stronger spices—and plays which are best described by saying that the age liked them, constitute the works on which she confidently rested her claim to the applause of posterity.

Her "Pindarick Ode on the Death of our late Majesty," i.e. Charles II., ought no longer to remain in oblivion. She compares his late Majesty to Moses, and James II. to Joshua. On his death-bed Charles

> Blest his stars that in an age so vain,
> Where jealous mischiefs, frauds, rebellions reign,
> Like Moses, he had led the murmuring crowd,
> Beneath the peaceful rule of his almighty wand;
> Pulled down the golden calf to which they bowed,
> And left 'em safe, entering the promised land:
> And to good Joshua now resigns his sway,
> Joshua, by heaven and nature pointed out to lead the way.
>
> * * * * * * *

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And now the fatal hour came on,
And all the blessed pow'rs above,
In haste to make him all their own,
Around the royal bed in shining order move.
Once more he longs to see the breaking day,
The last his mortal eyes shall ere behold,
And oft he asked if no kind ray
Its near approach foretold.
And when he found 'twas dawning in,
(With the cold tide of death that flowed all o'er)
"Draw, draw," said he, "this cloud that hangs between,
"And let me take my last adieu;
"Ah, let me take my last, last view,
"For I shall never, never see it more."

And now—

Officious angels catch his dying sighs,
And bear 'em up in triumph to the skies,
Each forms a soul! of the Divinest dress!
For new-born kings and heroes to possess.
The last that from the sacred Fabrick flew
Made Charles a god! and James a monarch too!"

Her "Congratulatory Poem to her most sacred Majesty on the universal hopes of all loyal persons for a Prince of Wales"—that is, to James the Second's queen, is not less good:—

Like the first sacred infant, this will come,
With promise laden from the blessed womb,
To call the wand'ring, scattered nations home.
Adoring princes shall arise from far,
Inform'd by angels, guided by his star,
The new-born wonder to behold, and greet;
And kings shall offer incense at his feet.
* * * * * * *

The poem concludes with this address to James—whilom Joshua:—

Behold with joy three prostrate nations come;
Albion, Hibernia, and old Caledon
Now join their int'rests, and no more dispute,
With seavoy murmurs, who is absolute;—
Since from the wonders of your life 'tis plain,
You will, you shall, and must for ever reign.

And this was written in 1688!!!

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The reader perhaps thinks this poetry pitiful and impious trash. Our ancestors thought it superior to anything Milton had written!

As a poetess, Astrea was most felicitous in ballad-writing. To collectors of ballads her sheets in grim black-letter are well known. The following may honestly be praised.

SCOTS SONG.

When Jemmy first began to love,
He was the gayest swain
That ever yet a flock had drove,
Or danced upon the plain.
'Twas then that I, weys me poor heart,
My freedom threw away;
And finding sweets in every smart,
I cou'd not say him nay.

And ever when he talked of love
He wou'd his eyes decline;
And every sigh a heart wou'd move,
Good faith, and why not mine?
He'd press my hand and kiss it oft,
In silence speak his name,
And whilst he treated me thus soft,
I wish'd him more to blame.

Sometimes to feed my flocks with him
My Jemmy wou'd invite me;
Where he the gayest songs wou'd sing
On purpose to delight me.
And Jemmy every grace display'd,
Which were enough I trow
To conquer any princely maid,
So did he me I vow.

But now for Jemmy must I mourn,
Who to the wars must go;
His sheep-hook to a sword must turn;
Alack, what shall I do?
His bag-pipe into warlike sounds
Must now exchanged be;
Instead of bracelets, fearful wounds;
Then what becomes of me?

Against Astrea's novels the charge of immorality has been brought, and it is difficult or rather impossible to

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rebut it. The only defence that can be made for them, is to be found in the fact that they did not run against the taste of the times in which they were written. Indeed, when compared with the indecencies of the Italian, Spanish and French novels, which were the models of Mrs. Behn's productions, the most objectionable passages in the memoirs of the "Court of King Bantam," and "Oroonoko" are very trivial offences. Steele passed sentence on her as one 'who understood the practick part of love better than the speculative.' Still her fictions so little shocked the feelings of our ancestors, that every young lady of fashion who could read, read them, and the French editor of "Agnes De Castro" said it was constructed so as to present "le vice sous les traits les plus odieux, et à faire respecter le vertu." But it cannot be denied that no man of common respectability would, in our days, permit these works to lie on the table of his drawing-room. Their very faults, however, become valuable historical features. Sir Walter Scott in a note to his Life of Swift says, "The editor was acquainted with an old lady of family, who assured him that, in her younger days, Mrs. Behn's novels were as currently upon the toilette as the works of Miss Edgeworth at present; and described with some humour her own surprise when the book falling into her hands after a long interval of years, and when its contents were quite forgotten, she found it impossible to endure at the age of fourscore, what at fifteen she, like all the fashionable world of the time, had perused without an idea of impropriety." Some may ask whether this faculty of detecting impurity where formerly none had been discernible proves an increase in refinement of taste? Few will hesitate as to an answer.

If Aphara's novels are open to censure, on the score of their indelicacy, her plays are yet more so, and may moreover be sentenced as stupid. Her dramatic works did not escape severe reflections from her contemporaries. Still

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they did not sin so much against the laws of propriety, as the comedies of the great poets of that era. Dryden, Wycherley, Southerne, Etherege, and a score other men, were applauded for compositions which no one can now read without disgust; but Astrea, who only imitated the men, called down upon herself vehement reproof. How came this? She answered the question in her way in the preface to *The Lucky Chance*. "But I make a challenge to any person of common sense and reason—that is not wilfully bent on ill-nature, and will, in spite of sense, wrest a *double entendre* from every thing, lying upon the catch for a jest or quibble, like a rook for a cully, but any unprejudiced person that knows not the author—to read one of my comedies and compare 'em with others of this age, and if they can find one word that can offend the chastest ear, I will submit to all their pevish cavills; but, right or wrong, they must be *criminal because a woman's*. . . . . And this thing I venture to say, though against my nature, because it has a vanity in it, that, had the plays I have writ come forth under any man's name, and never known to have been mine, I appeal to all unbyast judges of sense, if they had not said that person had made as many good comedies as any one man that has writ in our age; but a devil on't, *the woman damns the poet*."

In part, Aphara was right. The abuse she was favoured with she would not, in all probability, have received had she not been a woman. For though the age saw nothing unfit in *men's* writing immoral plays, and acting them in the presence of ladies, its taste revolted from the sight of a female author for the stage. We all know how an ingenious lady cured her husband of the reprehensible habit of snuff-taking, by starting a peculiar snuff-box of her own, and taking a pinch whenever her husband regaled himself with one. As the snuffy husband could not endure seeing his wife take "high-dried Scotch," so the filthy play-wrights

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were shocked by a woman imitating them. That the beautiful, witty Aphara, gentle and refined in appearance as she was generous at heart, could put her signature to ribald comedies, and that she was only a pupil painting after a copy, were truths that wounded and humiliated the wits of the theatres. Pope lashed the offender—

> The stage how loosely does Astrea tread;

and dedicated his greatest work to Mr. Congreve, whose comedies, though brilliant as wit can make them, are certainly not free from impurity.

When the first stone had been thrown at poor Astrea, the number of her accusers became numerous. Her own sex was especially severe on her. Virtuous "ladies," as the victim herself said, "taking up the scandal from some conceited sparks who would in spite of nature be wits and beaus," cried fie in most edifying tones, and then retired to their closets to enjoy the songs of D'Urfey, and the satires of Wilmot. Men, too, who were her personal friends, played her false. "I cannot omit to tell you," she writes, "that a wit of the town, a friend of mine, at Will's coffee-house, the first night of the play, cry'd it down as much as in him lay, who before had read it, and assured me he never saw a prettier comedy. So complaisant one pestilent wit will be to another, and in the full cry make his noise too." Poor Aphara! what great pain can a little, mean heart, and a smooth tongue work! Let us hope that to balance against this mortification, she had the joy of having repeated to her the praises poured on her in her absence, by some blunt, rugged friend, who could not applaud her to her face.

She fought a brave fight with her enemies. The men were astonished at finding her strong enough to hurl them down. The ladies, although she was fighting their battle as well as her own, were jealous of a sister so superior to themselves. It was, indeed, a novel contest. Hitherto it

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had been received as a fact not to be questioned, that any woman was the inferior of almost every man, and that any weaker vessel who took it upon herself to figure in literature, was to be very modest in her manner of doing so—to depreciate the powers of her sex—to "invoke the muse" with a confession of her utter unworthiness—and to take every opportunity to exalt the lords of the creation. The delightful Duchess of Newcastle could never allude to women in general, without attacking their ignorance and mean tempers, and calling them "a kind of mountebanks." Katherine Philips, the chaste Orinda, who had been formed by a strict Presbyterian education, to whom Cowley wrote—

> We allowed you beauty, and we did submit
> To all the tyrannies of it;
> Ah! cruel sex, will you depose us too in wit?

produced a very meagre poetry, and made humble apologies to the men—not for her innumerable sins against the laws of grammar, but for writing at all—being only a woman! The same timidity characterized nearly all the female writers of the close of the seventeenth and opening of the eighteenth centuries. Lady Mary Wortley Montague certainly had no diffidence; and some of her verses would make a shoe-black blush; but *she* was a woman of the world and of rank, and naturally courageous.

It was Astrea who first refused to be bound by any flimsy distinctions, and said boldly—"Whatever it is right for you men to do, it is right for me to attempt." The challenge was answered, the conflict began, and lasted long;—the lady returned, and usually with interest, every blow she received. Her power of raillery and her spirit were admitted. "She was of a generous and open temper, something passionate, very serviceable to her friends in all that was in her power, and could sooner forgive an injury than

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do one. She had wit, honour, good-humour, and judgment. She was mistress of all the pleasing arts of conversation; but used them not to any one but those who loved plain-dealing." This is the testimony of her most intimate female companion.

It would be difficult to give anything like an accurate picture of Astrea's daily life, that would not horrify modern refinement. No imputation approaching dishonour rests on her name; but her amusements and tastes were those of her age. In Charles's Court, "ladies highly born, highly bred, and naturally quick-witted, were unable to write a line in their mother tongue without solecisms and faults of spelling, such as a charity girl would now be ashamed to commit." In the public promenades of the capital, they would grimace, ogle, and flirt with strangers: at the theatres they would call out in a loud voice to their own acquaintance, and bandy jokes with them: at balls they romped and rollicked with the sparks, pouring forth badinage which a maid-servant in any reputable household would now be ashamed to utter: their habitual discourse was garnished with a disgusting imprecation, which would not now be heard from the lips of the most debased, and was on topics most displeasing to feminine delicacy. Satirists and grave chroniclers agree in their accounts, when describing the manners of the period. In such a society as Evelyn, Pepys, and Grammont delineate, a lady might live the pace, and yet cause no scandal. Aphara availed herself of the license in such manner as suited her temperament. She encouraged the addresses of young noodles, conceited enough to think no woman safe against their attacks; and when their impertinences became dangerous, she had them unceremoniously kicked out of her house.

She had not passed the middle age, and was still young in the buoyancy of her spirits, when she died on the 16th of April, 1689. Her death, we are in-

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formed, was occasioned by an unskilful physician—a fact which seems to strike her biographer, whom we have often quoted, as singular! She was interred in Westminster Abbey. Gerard Langbaine, the second, gives, in his "Account of English Dramatic Poets," the following as the inscription on her tablet, beneath her name and the date of her death:—

Here lies a proof that wit can be,
Defence enough against mortalitie

Another biographical work has the following lame, though more orthodox, version of the foregoing lines:—

Here lies a proof that wit can never be
Defence against mortality.
Great poetess, O! thy stupendous lays
The world admires, and the Muses praise.

Aphara's last achievement was the translation of the sixth book of Cowley's "Plants." Westley makes her exertions on this work the cause of her death:—

But why should the soft sex be robb'd of thee?
Why should not England know
How much she does to Cowley owe?
How much to Boscobel's ever sacred tree?
The hills, the groves, the plains, the woods,
The fields, the meadows, and the floods:
The flow'ry world, where Gods and Poets use
To court a mortal or a muse?
It shall be done. But who? ah! who shall dare
So vast a toil to undergo,
And all the world's just censure bear,
Thy strength, and their own weakness show?
Soft Afra, who had led our shepherds long,
Who long the nymphs and swains did guide,
Our envy, her own sex's pride,
When all her force on this great theme she'd try'd,
She strain'd awhile to reach the inimitable song—
She strain'd awhile, and wisely dy'd.

Let us now say farewell to Aphara Behn. Her dust is mingled with the ashes of kings, bards, and patriots, in that

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noble temple in which our Byron has no statue,—in that temple, the walls of which, it was once said, would be profaned should they be inscribed with the name of him who sung—

> O, welcome, pure-eyed faith, white handed hope,
> Thou hovering angel, girt with golden wings;
> And thou, unblemish'd form of chastity!

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CHAPTER IV.

DANIEL DE FOE.

Few lives have been more active, and more fruitful of results than was that of Daniel De Foe. He was a hero from the day he left school at Newington, till he died full of years and worn by poverty. But he had to share the fate that many not less noble men had experienced before and have toiled under since his time. His heroism was misunderstood. His moral constitution, like his wit, was beyond his era, and he was doomed to undergo the ill as well as the good of that fortune. Enemies hated him, and friends mistrusted him. In his life he without doubt knew many who admired him, like honest Dunton, for his honesty, his subtlety, his daring, and his perseverance, but very few were the educated men who sincerely wished him well. He has been dead over a hundred and twenty years, and has now plenty of defenders,—Hazlitt, Lamb, Forster! What living (much more dead) man can want more applauders? We may wonder if, in the unknown land, he takes pleasure in thinking how he has been righted. Perhaps he looks on and says, "I knew it would be so;" or maybe he mutters, "a pity these pleasant compliments did not come a hundred and fifty years sooner—at Guildhall and St. James's."

Daniel De Foe was born in 1661, in the parish of St. Giles, Cripplegate. His grandfather was a substantial yeoman at Elton, rich enough to keep hounds. His father carried on the degrading vocation of a butcher. So did Wolsey's father. Mrs. Nickleby asks how this comes, whether there may not be something in the suet. The butcher, however,

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did his utmost to be a good man; he was a rigid dissenter; and died rich.

Daniel was early indoctrinated into the religious principles of his parents, by the presbyterian Dr. Annesley, the ejected parson of Cripplegate. It was a common thing in that age for clergymen to relinquish their benefices rather than act against conscience, and their doing so was held as a matter of course; but now such a divine is a rarity, and newspapers enlarge on him as a miracle of probity. This good doctor inspired his pupil with no little fervour for the gospel. A panic spread amongst God-fearing nonconformists that the arm of the law would strip them of their Bibles; so forthwith, all the country over, there were simple families hard at work making copies of the Scriptures, so that if the printed word should be taken from them, they might still have the blessed books in manuscript. Little Dan, then quite a child, copied out the whole of the Pentateuch, and then—stuck fast. Poor little Dan! Cannot one see at this day his inked finger-nails, and imagine how his wee hands ached? Perhaps, moreover, when the young scribe stopped, and said he *could not* go on further, Pastor Annesley reproved him and called him *lukewarm!*

At fourteen years of age, Daniel De Foe (or Foe as he was then called) entered the once famous dissenting academy at Newington; and after four years' study left that nursery, by no means a good classic—which of course he would have been had he been educated at Oxford.

At twenty-one years, he dipped his pen in the ink, and sat down to do battle. The title of his book ran, "Speculum Crape-gownorum; or, a Looking-glass for the young Academicks, new foyled, &c. By a guide to the Inferior Clergie. London; 1682." Roger L'Estrange, who was the author of the "Guide to the Inferior Clergy," was deeply obliged by the attention. "Oh, pray, don't mention it," Daniel replied, "one good turn deserves another."

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This was in 1682. Richard Steele and Addison were respectively about eleven and ten years of age.

In 1685, Charles II. died. By this event De Foe was doubtless not a little affected. A clear-headed, sagacious young man, of pure manners, and enthusiastic for religious liberty, was one likely to cherish a lively affection for a perjured roué. Doubtless when he read Mrs. Behn's elegy on the sainted Charles, he formed a due estimate of its merits.

'Tis June, 1685. King James and non-resistance have scarcely been preached up in the London pulpits, when the Duke of Monmouth lands at Lyme, in Dorsetshire. In the Duke's army is Daniel Foe. Anything to knock down the enemies of religious liberty.

That contest ended in favour of the worse side; and the land was *chastened* and *corrected* for its impiety, by its divinely appointed ruler. Daniel Foe escaped to the Continent. Where he went, one cannot exactly say. But he was, ere he died, what was accounted in those times a very travelled man, being familiar with France, Germany, and Spain. On returning from foreign lands, which he did after an absence of not many months, he either commenced or resumed business as a hose-factor, in Freeman's-court, Cornhill. His political enemies deemed this a highly contemptible proceeding. What! sell stockings behind a counter? Pope and Gay shuddered at the thought; Swift, who had never occupied a position lower than that of a menial in a great man's house, gave a grin of contempt; and a pack of ignorant rogues, who tried to cover their moral turpitude under the name of literature, and who had not among them a decent pair of stockings, wrote ungrammatical doggrel on the hose-factor's degradation. De Foe, probably only out of pure mischief and just to give his pursuers the slip for a few seconds, replied, "But, I don't sell stockings. You're in the wrong, gentlemen; I am not so base

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a thing as a retail dealer, but a negociator between the manufacturer and the small merchant." "Just hearken to him," exclaimed the gentlemen, who a day before had said anybody ought to blush to deal in stockings, &c., "just hearken to him! The man is ashamed of his calling." It was also about this time De Foe put the prefix of De before his name. What led him to do so it would be hard to say. Probably he fancied De made Foe sound prettier. This step again brought on him a vast amount of ridicule; although it was then the custom for gentlemen to alter the spelling of their names, to put in an *e* or take it out, just as the whim took them. We could point to many unaffected and honourable gentlemen of that time, who changed from one mode of spelling their names to another, much in the same way as they might take a new wine into favour for habitual drinking.

In 1688, he becomes a liveryman of London.

In 1688 also, other events, almost as important, take place. William the Third lands, and James, king of England, *jure divino*, runs away. The young London trader was up again. On to the death for freedom of thought! He was one of those who guarded William at Henley, and in 1689 he rode amongst the guard of honour who surrounded William and Mary, when they paid a visit to the city. The great William had a cordial admiration for his sagacious, active, and truly noble subject. The hose-factor participated largely in the secret councils of his sovereign, and was honoured with employment on more than one important service.

Just about, and for some time after, the revolution, De Foe resided at Tooting, where he was surrounded with the signs of prosperity, and moreover kept his coach. At Tooting he exerted himself successfully to bring the dissenters of the place into a regular congregation. At this period of his life he was involved in commercial affairs—as a city-man

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on Cornhill, as a Spanish merchant (or peddler, as his opponents suggested), and as a large proprietor in the tile-kiln and brick-kiln works at Tilbury, Essex. The *exact* points of time when he entered into these two latter speculations cannot be fixed.

Severe reverses in business soon befell him—from what cause it cannot be said, but certainly not from want of industry on his part. In 1692, he failed; and retired to Bristol to be for a while out of the way of his creditors. It is by the world's treatment of a man when in adversity that we best see some features of his character. Creditors neither are nor ever have been a very merciful class of men; but De Foe's, so high a sense had they of his honour, took his personal security for the amount of composition on his debts. But being *legally* freed from liabilities was with De Foe very different from being *morally* liberated. A large portion of his laborious existence was devoted to discharging debts from which his composition had in the eye of the law absolved him. No less a sum than 12,000*l*, earned by continued labour, did he thus pay away.

From 1695 to 1699 he had the post of accountant to the Commissioners of the Glass Duty.

In the January of 1701 appeared one of his most famous productions, "The True-born Englishman," a satire of the first order of merit. Rugged the verse is without doubt, but the language is as manly as the sentiment, and the sarcasm is sharp as a needle, pierces to the marrow, and then burns like caustic.

It has been said that the two first lines of a poem will usually show whether it is worth reading. The two first of "The True-born Englishman," are

> Wherever God erects a house of prayer,
> The devil always builds a chapel there.

Let the reader continue,—or rather, with the poem before

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him, let him discontinue reading it if he can. Many couplets will cling to the least tenacious memory:—such as

> Great families of yesterday we show,
> And lords whose parents were, the Lord knows who.

The poem sold rapidly. The author published nine editions, and it was issued to the world twelve times without his concurrence. Of the cheaper numbers 80,000 were sold. Englishmen learned, and with fair grace acknowledged the truth of the lesson, that their national extraction instead of being *pure*, was obscure and confused in the extreme. Never again were Dutchmen sneered at for not being true-born Englishmen.

In March, 1702, the great King William died. Times were now to change. Intolerant churchmen were to gain a passing ascendancy, and conscientious dissenters were to be persecuted. At this crisis De Foe sent forth his most notorious, and, perhaps, his most brilliant political pamphlet—the "Shortest Way with the Dissenters; a Proposal for the establishment of the church. London: 1702." Those who have studied the powers of irony displayed in this and other similar writings of De Foe, will not, however much they continue to admire Gulliver's Travels, be inclined to rate the Dean's irony as pre-eminent for originality. But irony is a dangerous weapon to use. What with fools who *cannot*, and rogues who *will not* understand, it too frequently wounds him who wields it not less than those against whom it is employed. "But consider, my dear lad, that fools cannot distinguish this,—and that knaves will not," said Eugenius to Yorick. *Sound* churchmen were delighted with the barbarous proposals, found in "the shortest way," for the treatment of non-conformists; grave clergymen said the book ought to be bound with the sacred Scriptures. The dissenters were not less affected—but in a different way: in the anonymous author of the tract they saw only

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a blood-thirsty foe. At last the secret was discovered;—the churchmen were furious at the blow they had received, so deeply humiliating to them as Christians and people of intelligence; the dissenters were far from being pleased—they could not forgive their advocate the possession of talents so superior to their own; and they never ceased to remember with bitterness the ridicule they had incurred by being hoaxed *by their own hoax*. But though the churchmen were the laughing stock of all but their own partisans, they were powerful, and had the means of vengeance in their hands. Let us read the *London Gazette*, Jan. 10th, 1702-3:—

"Whereas Daniel De Foe, alias De Foee, is charged with writing a scandalous and seditious pamphlet, entitled "The Shortest Way with the Dissenters;" he is a middle-sized, spare man, about forty years old; of a brown complexion, and dark brown-coloured hair, but wears a wig; a hooked nose, a sharp chin, grey eyes, and a large mole near his mouth; was born in London, and for many years was a hose-factor, in Freeman's Yard, in Corn Hill, and now is owner of the brick and pantile works near Tilbury Fort, in Essex; whoever shall discover the said Daniel De Foe to one of her Majesty's principal secretaries of state, or any one of her Majesty's justices of the peace, so as he may be apprehended, shall have a reward of fifty pounds, which her Majesty has ordered immediately to be paid on such discovery."

De Foe having disappeared from the storm, the bookseller and printer were taken into custody. On this, the author surrendered himself into the hands of the Philistines. On February 24th, 1703, he was indicted for *libelling the Tory party*, and he was tried at the Old Bailey in the following July; he was found guilty; and the sentence was, that he should pay 200 marks to the Queen; stand three times in the pillory; be imprisoned during the Queen's pleasure; and find sureties for his good behaviour for seven years.

It may not be omitted, moreover, that the House of Commons, February 25th, 1702-3, resolved with regard to "The Shortest Way," "that this book, being full of false and scandalous reflections on this parliament, and tending to promote sedition, be burnt by the hands of the common

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hangman, to-morrow, in New Palace-yard." Poor book! Poor honourable members! They little thought what was the principal thing that fire destroyed!

Let us now read the *London Gazette*, No. 3,936, Thursday, July 29th, to Monday, August 2nd, 1703:—"London, July 31st. On the 29th instant, Daniel Foe, alias, De Foe, stood in the pillory before the Royal Exchange in Cornhill, as he did yesterday near the conduit in Cheapside, and this day at Temple-bar," &c., &c. But to the great mortification of enthusiastic admirers of religious intolerance, the mob did not annoy this hose-factor when exposed in the pillory, but closing round him protected him from all annoyance, sang his songs in compliment to him, drank his health, and pelted him—not with rotten eggs, but with flowers. Really and truly, the House of Commons, and all the bigoted ecclesiastics of the kingdom, were the ones pilloried, and not the courageous writer. Pope wrote in the Dunciad:—

"Fearless on high stood unabashed De Foe."

But the poet lived to repent the line, and to learn (to use the happy words of an eminent author) that in attempting to murder he had committed suicide. Swift spoke of De Foe as "the fellow that was pilloried: I forget his name:" but a cruel punishment was in store for that selfish, bad, dishonest man. The martyr himself wrote, while in Newgate, an ode to the pillory, containing the following lines:—

Hail! hi'roglyphick state machine,
Condemned to punish fancy in:
Men, that are men, can in thee feel no pain,
And all thy insignificance disdain.
Contempt, that false, new word for shame,
Is without crime an empty name—
A shadow to amuse mankind,
But never frights the wise or well-fixed mind:
Virtue despises human scorn
And scandals innocence adorn.

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This trial stripped De Foe of £3,500, again reducing him, with a wife and family, to penury. But while in prison he worked hard. The greater the difficulties around him, the greater became the man. He commenced his newspaper, "the *Review*," the parent of the Tatler, Spectator, Rambler. At first it only came out twice a week; but soon an additional weekly number was added. Of this periodical, De Foe was the sole writer. In prison and out of prison, in sickness and health, he supplied the papers: an unparelleled instance of industry! But this was only a portion, and a small one, of his toil. Besides "the *Review*," which lasted for thirteen years, no less than one hundred and eighty-three separate works—poems, novels, political essays, histories, and expositions of moral questions—unquestionably came from his pen; and fifty-two more are, with sufficient reason, attributed to him. But a change in his lot is at hand.

In 1704, he is released from prison by the influence of Harley.

In 1705, he is sent abroad by Harley on a secret mission.

In 1706, he makes the first of a series of visits to Scotland, to negociate and forward the Union; in bringing about which admirable measure he was mainly instrumental.

In 1708, he entered Godolphin's service—that is, he remained in the Queen's with Harley's warm approval.

Again he is indicted for writings: the only fault of which was, that they were addressed to blockheads and dishonest men. Again he has to pay dear for his indulgence in irony. He is fined £800 and thrown into Newgate. But after a few months' confinement, he is released, November, 1713.

In July, 1714, Anne dies; and with her death, a pension De Foe had received for his services in Scotland ceases.

In 1715, De Foe retired from political life, and took his farewell to party strife in "an Appeal to Honour and Justice,

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though it be of his Worst Enemies. By Daniel De Foe. Being a true account of his conduct in public affairs. London, 1715." While he was employed in revising the work, he was struck with apoplexy.

But soon the lion-hearted man revived, and he was at work again with his pen.

In 1719 (when the author was fifty-eight years of age) appeared Robinson Crusoe.

From his retirement from the arena of politics, history says little of him, save that which his immortal works tell us. In 1724 he was living in opulence and with dignity, at a house in Church-street, Newington—which is at the present day an object of curiosity, as having been the residence of the celebrated writer and patriot. He was then a hearty old gentleman,—distressed certainly by bodily ailments, but with a vigorous intellect, and a heart kindly as ever. It was about this time that one Thomas Webb wrote:—"And poor distressed I, left alone, and no one to go and speak to, save only Mr. De Foe, who hath acted a noble and generous part towards me and my poor children. The Lord reward him and his wife with the blessings of the upper and nether spring, and with the blessings of his basket and store."

A fresh reverse comes. And in 1730, the aged De Foe is in a debtors' prison.

Yet another blow;—the steel enters to the heart. His son, in whom he trusted, dishonours his name! Let us read De Foe's letter to his son-in-law, Mr. Baker, the celebrated naturalist:—

"Dear Mr. Baker,

"I have your very kind and affectionate letter of the 1st, but not come to my hand till the 10th; where it had been delayed I know not, as your kind manner, and kinder thought from which it flows (for I take all you say as I believe you to be, sincere and Nathaniel-like, without guile) was a particular satisfaction to me: so the stop of a letter, however it happened, deprived me of that cordial too many days, considering how much I stood in need of it, to support a mind sinking under

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the weight of an affliction too heavy for my strength, and looking on myself as abandoned of every comfort, every friend, and every relative, except such only as are able to give me no assistance.

"I am sorry you should say at the beginning of your letter you were debarred seeing me. Depend on my sincerity for this: I am far from debarring you. On the contrary, it will be a greater comfort to me than any I now enjoy, that I could have your agreeable visits with safety, and could see both you and my dearest Sophia, could it be without giving her the grief of seeing her father *in tenebris*, and under the load of insupportable sorrows. I am sorry I must open my griefs so far as to tell her, it is not the blow I received from a wicked, purjured, and contemptible enemy that has broken in upon my spirit; which, as she well knows, has carried me on through greater disasters than these. But it has been the injustice, unkindness, and, I must say, inhuman dealing of my own son, which has both ruined my family, and, in a word, has broken my heart; and as I am at this time under a very heavy weight of illness, which I think will be a fever, I take this occasion to vent my grief in the breasts, who I know will make a prudent use of it, and tell you, nothing but this has conquered or could conquer me. *Et tu, Brute.* I depended upon him—I trusted him—I gave up my two dear, unprovided children into his hands; but he has no compassion, and suffers them and their poor dying mother to beg their bread at his door, and to crave, as if it were an alms—what he is bound under hand and seal, and by the most sacred promises, to supply them with—himself at the same living in a profusion of plenty. It is too much for me. Excuse my infirmity; I can say no more; my heart is too full. I only ask one thing of you as a dying request. Stand by them when I am gone, and let them not be wronged while he is able to do them right. Stand by them as a brother: and if you have anything within you owing to my memory, who have bestowed on you the best gift I had to give, let them not be injured and trampled on by false pretences and unnatural reflections. I hope they will want no help but that of comfort and counsel; but that they will indeed want, being too easie to be managed by words and promises.

"It adds to my grief that it is so difficult to me to see you. I am at a distance from London, in Kent; nor have I a lodging in London, nor have I been at that place in the Old Bailey since I wrote you I was removed from it. At present I am weak, having had some fits of a fever that have left me low. But those things much more.

"I have not seen son or daughter, wife or child, many weeks, and know not which way to see them. They dare not come by water, and by land here is no coach, and I know not what to do.

"I would say (I hope with comfort) that 'tis yet well. I am so near my journey's end, and am hastening to the place where the weary are at rest, and where the wicked cease to trouble; be it that the passage is rough, and the day stormy, by what way soever He please to bring me to the end of it, I desire to finish life with this temper of soul in all cases. *Te Deum laudamus.*

"It adds to my grief that I must never see the pledge of your mutual

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love, my little grandson. Give him my blessing, and may he be to you both your joy in youth and your comfort in age, and never add a sigh to your sorrow. But, alas! that is not to be expected. Kiss my dear Sophy once more for me; and if I must see her no more, tell her this is from a father that loved her above, above all his comforts to his last breath.—Your unhappy

D. F.

"About two miles from Greenwich, Kent.
Tuesday, Aug. 12, 1730."

The brave old man's work was almost accomplished. His sufferings were at their bitterest; but, thank God! near their termination.

To the very last he appears to have exerted himself. At the close of 1729, he was engaged on a work of imagination, sending revised sheets to his publishers, asking pardon for a delay in returning them, caused by "exceeding illness," and promising to be prompt with the remainder. There is no evidence that this last effort was ever published. The manuscript was in the possession of Mr. Dawson Turner, of Suffolk.

On April 24, 1731, he was taken by death in Ropemaker's-alley, Moorfields, in the parish of St. Giles's, Cripplegate—the same parish in which he first drew the breath of life. Whether he expired in a decent lodging, or in a dismal garret—whether alone, or tended in his last moments by his wife and children, it is impossible to say. The Parish Register contains the fullest account extant of his interment:—"1731, Daniel Defoe, gentleman. To Tindall's (Lethargy). April 26." Tindall's was the general burial-ground for Dissenters.

A twinge shakes the nerves as we read that ambiguous word *gentleman*. It is such a petty title to give Daniel De Foe.

The man who, when a beardless youth, saw the truth, and fearlessly declared it—who risked his life for what he felt to be his duty—who fought zealously, and without

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fainting, for freedom, and was, without doubt, an instrument in the hands of Providence for the preservation of our national religion—for in those days of peril, when the weight of a feather would at times have turned the balance in favour of Romanism, Protestantism was guarded not by the Anglican priesthood (for they betrayed her), but by the great champions of spiritual freedom, the Nonconformists—the man who laboured effectually in consolidating the sister countries of England and Scotland; who was the cause of innumerable social reforms, amongst which the removal of the abuses of the sanctuary at Whitefriars (Alsatia), and the Mint, may be mentioned; who raised his voice against the cruelties of slavery, devised schemes for the amelioration of the poor, and continually urged that woman, so formed by nature to elevate man, should be raised from the depths of ignorance, which was her lot in most cases; the man who tried so many fields of literature, and gained distinction in them all; he who, honourable, single-hearted, fierce in the day of battle, was worthy the regard and confidence of England's last great king, William III.—was Daniel De Foe, gentleman!

Not many insights do we get into De Foe's domestic life. He was married twice; firstly to Mary; and, secondly, to Susannah, but the maiden surname of neither is known. In the year 1706, he had seven children; but in 1707, his daughter Martha died. One son, Daniel De Foe, emigrated to Carolina, carrying with him, as his father's representative, a liberal contribution to that stock of Anglo-Saxon intellect (or *true-born English!*) that has made our Transatlantic cousins (of whom we are so naturally proud) a nation beloved and honoured wherever our common tongue is spoken. Another son, Bernard, took the name of Norton, and was mentioned by Pope in the "Dunciad." He was editor of "The Flying Post," and was the author of "A Complete Dictionary, by B. N. De Foe, Gent., 1735," a

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"Memoir of the House of Orange," and "The Life of Alderman Barber." The daughters managed to recover their property from their despicable brother, and settled comfortably in life—Hannah as a maiden lady, Henrietta as the wife of a gentleman of condition. Sophia's (Mrs. Baker's) son lived to be the author of "The Companion to the Play-house." A great grandson of De Foe was hanged at Tyburn, Jan. 2, 1771; and another great-grandson was, in 1787, cook on the *Savage*, sloop-of-war. These two last, we may presume, were the descendants of the wretch who, whilst "living in a profusion of plenty," allowed his mother and sisters to be in want! From this branch came "the poor descendant from De Foe," to support whose old age there has lately been an appeal to the charitable in the columns of the *Times*.

In what estimation are we to hold De Foe as a writer of fiction? And for what is the English novel indebted to him? The latter question can be answered in a few words and with great precision. De Foe brought into the domain of imaginative prose-writing graphic description of scenes, events, and mental emotions, and quick-pointed conversation.

Of "Robinson Crusoe," what necessity is there to speak? Who is not familiar with its pages? What school-boy has not undergone a whipping for leaving his lessons unstudied while he has been sitting in the Solitary's hut, or spending an afternoon with "man Friday?" How many in the decline of life have over the leaves of that wonderful book grown young again! Charles Lamb says, "Next to the Holy Scriptures, it may be safely asserted that this delightful romance has, ever since it was written, excited the first and most powerful influence upon the juvenile mind of England, nor has its popularity been much less among any of the other nations of Christendom." He might have added, "and out of Christendom too." It has been trans-

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lated into Arabic; and Burckhart "heard it read aloud among the wandering tribes in the cool hours of evening." "*That* island," a beautiful writer has observed, "placed 'far amidst the melancholy main' and remote from the track of human wanderings, remains to the last the greenest spot in memory. At whatever distance of time, the scene expands before us as clearly and distinctly as when we first beheld it; we still see the green savannahs and silent woods, which mortal footstep had never disturbed; its birds of strange wing, that had never heard the report of a gun; its goats browsing securely in the vale, or peeping over the heights, in alarm at the first sight of man. We can yet follow its forlorn inhabitant on tiptoe with suspended breath, prying curiously into every recess, glancing fearfully at every shade, starting at every sound, and then look forth with him upon the lone and boisterous ocean with the sickening feeling of an exile cut off for ever from all human intercourse. Our sympathy is more truly engaged by the poor shipwrecked mariner, than by the great, the lovely, and the illustrious of the earth. We find a more effectual wisdom in its homely reflections than is to be derived from the discourses of the learned and the eloquent. The interest with which we converse with him in the retirement of his cave, or go abroad with him on the business of the day, is as various and powerful as the means by which it is kept up are simple and inartificial. So true is everything to nature, and such reality is there in every particular, that the slightest circumstance creates a sensation, and the print of a man's foot or shoe is the source of more genuine terror than all the strange sights and odd noises in the romances of Mrs. Radcliffe."

Children are charmed with the *story* of "Robinson Crusoe;" men of thought are not less delighted with the narrative; but they have recourse to it also as a book instructing them in some of the most valuable truths of

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philosophy. He must possess a far lower than a merely ordinary mind who leaves the perusal of this wonderful book without having acquired from it a new insight into his own nature, the means of avoiding the evil, and attaining to the good,—without having perceived how many infant faculties of his being might by training be made to assume grand proportions, and be endowed with vast strength. It is a great religious poem. It is "the drama of solitude;" the object of which is to show that in the most wretched state of desertion there still remains within the human breast a power of life independent of external circumstances; and that where man is not, there God especially abides.

Why did not De Foe, with such an unexampled capability as a writer of fiction, occupy himself earnestly in his art? Why did he not expend thought, toil, and long years, in elaborating two such works as "Robinson Crusoe," or the commencement of "Colonel Jack," instead of scribbling page after page, without consideration enough to avoid dulness, stories replete with obscenities he must have disapproved, and nonsense that he must have grinned at with contempt even while the pen was in his hand? Foster, in his graphic and fascinating sketch of De Foe and his times, bids us remember, when judging of "Moll Flanders" and "Roxana," the tone of society at the time of their appearance. Without a doubt, measured by the standard of the vicious literature of the Restoration and the two succeeding ages, they do not especially sin against purity of morals. But in this we cannot find a valid apology for De Foe, who, in composing them, put his hand to works that all serious men of his own religious views must have regarded with warm disapproval. De Foe was not by profession amongst the frivolous or godless of his generation; he was loud in his condemnation of the stage, of gambling, and of debauchery; he not only knew that voluptuous excess was criminal, but he raised his voice to shame it out of society,—

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and yet he exercised his talents in depicting scenes of sensual enjoyment, which no virtuous nature can dwell on without pain—no vicious one without pleasure. What was his motive? Money.

Drelincourt's book of "Consolations against the fears of Death,"—one of the heaviest pieces of literature religion has given to the world (and that is saying no little)—hung on hand, so that the publisher, much downcast, informed De Foe he should lose a considerable sum. "Don't fear!—I'll make the edition go off," said De Foe; and sitting down he wrote "A True Relation of the Apparition of one Mrs. Veal, the next day after her death, to one Mrs. Bargrave, at Canterbury, the 8th of September, 1705, which apparition recommends the perusal of Drelincourt's book of 'Consolations against the fears of Death.'" The ghost story startled and took captive the silly people the author intended, and he knew so well how, to hoax. A true, *bona fide* ghost of a respectable Mrs. Veal had urged on mankind the study of Drelincourt. Forthwith the publisher's shop was crowded with purchasers, and the edition rapidly left his shelves. It is strange how De Foe's biographers and admirers delight in this story. It may show De Foe to advantage in an intellectual point of view, leading a crowd of John Bulls astray, and all the while laughing at them; but as a proof of his mental power such testimony is valueless, because unnecessary. That Mrs. Veal's apparition was ingeniously told, no one will deny; but then it was a wilful falsehood, all the same for its cunning construction, and was framed to puff a bad book. Such a deed would aid the "Woolly Horse" and "Fejee Mermaid" in giving grace to a Barnum's life; but to think that De Foe could tell lies for a trade purpose is more than common pain.

And here we find the secret of this great man's shame. He was a man of somewhat expensive habits, continually entering into rash monetary speculations, and burdened

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with debts, which in *honour* he felt himself bound to discharge. Of all men he was just the one to be called upon for large sums of wealth, and to have little in hand to meet such demands. His pen was a ready one at earning money; he could turn off any composition with facility: and as, just then, tales (highly seasoned) met with the best prices in the market, he wrote them as fast as his pen could run over the paper, and spiced them up to the palates of his employers. And what trash (dishonest quack gibberish to get pennies from the crowd) poured in unceasing flow from him, it grieves one to reflect. "The History of the Life and Adventures of Mr. Duncan Campbell; a gentleman who, though deaf and dumb, writes down any stranger's name at first sight; with their future contingencies of fortune. Now living in Exeter-Court, over against the Savoy in the Strand." Mr. Duncan Campbell was the arch-impostor in the magic line of his day. All that table-turning, hat-spinning, spirit-rapping, and Mormonism are to us, was Mr. Duncan Campbell to the addled-pates of his generation. At every drum in the fashionable world ladies spoke in ecstacies of "that duck of a Mr. Duncan Campbell," how he knew everything, was a medium, and a gentleman by birth; and how no one of ordinary sagacity doubted his powers. De Foe, in his "Life and Adventures," of course declared his belief in the fellow; a book exposing the man's tricks would not have sold. Steele mentioned this Campbell in "the Tatler;" and Eliza Heywood (the authoress of "Jemmy and Jenny Jessamy," "The Fruitless Enquiry," and "Betsey Thoughtless,") wrote a work similar to De Foe's, called "A Spy on the Conjuror; Memoirs of the Famous Mr. Duncan Campbell." By the way, have any of the readers of these pages perused Eliza Heywood's other works—her "Letters on all occasions lately passed between persons of distinction," of which Letter IV. is entitled "Sarpedon to the over-upbraiding Myrtilla," and XI.,—"The repenting

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Aristus to the cruel, but most adorable Panthea," and XLIV., "Belliss to Philemon, on perceiving a decay of his affection?" If the ladies are unacquainted with this literature, let them be advised and remain in their ignorance.

Smollett pursued a better course with regard to the "famous Mr. Campbell," in making him the object of laughter and the source of instruction to the town under the name of Cadwallader. But then Smollett was a long age posterior to De Foe.

Similar to the "Life of Duncan Campbell," was De Foe's sketch of "Dickory Cronke, the Dumb Philosopher," &c., &c. Alas! alas! and it was only for a morsel of bread.

We have stated our thanks are due to De Foe for giving the English novel, graphic descriptions, and quick, pointed conversations. In one of the qualities of a novelist he was unaccountably deficient—not even coming up to his precursor, Mrs. Behn. To the construction or the most vague conception of a plot he seems to have been quite inadequate. This may be accounted for, partly by the fact that, from abstaining on religious grounds from the theatres, his mind had not been duly educated in this most difficult department of his art; and partly by the rapidity with which his "histories" were evolved. Whatever may be the cause of the fault, that it exists few will be so rash as to question. All De Foe's novels, long as they are, are but a string of separate anecdotes related of one person, but having no other connection with each other. In no one of them are there forces at work that necessitate the conclusion of the story at a certain point. One meets with no mystery, no dénouement in them. They go on and on (usually at a brisk pace, with abundance of dramatic positions), till it apparently strikes the author he has written a good bookful, and then he winds up with a page and a half of "so he lived happily all the rest of his days," intermixed with some awkward moralising by way of apology for the laxity of the bulk of

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the work. For example, "Roxana" might as well have been twice or half as long as it is.

One feature more of De Foe as a novelist. May he not be regarded as the first English writer of prose-fiction who pointed out the field of history to imaginative literature? His "Journal of the Plague Year;" his "Memoirs of a Cavalier;" and "The Memoirs of an English Officer who served in the Dutch War in 1672, to the peace of Utrecht in 1713, &c. &c. By Captain George Carlton," were the pioneers of that army of which the Waverley Novels form the main body. The great Earl of Chatham used, before he discovered it to be fiction, to speak of the "Memoirs of a Cavalier" as the best account of the civil wars extant. And of "Captain Carleton" there is the following anecdote in Boswell's Johnson. "The best account of Lord Peterborough that I have happened to meet with is in 'Captain Carleton's Memoirs.' Carleton was descended from an officer who distinguished himself at the siege of Derry. He was an officer, and what was rare at that time, had some knowledge of engineering. Johnson said he had never heard of the book. Lord Elliot had a copy at Port Elliot; but, after a good deal of enquiry, procured a copy in London, and sent it to Johnson, who told Sir Joshua Reynolds that he was going to bed when it came, but was so much pleased with it that he sat up till he read it through, and found in it such an air of truth that he could not doubt its authenticity, adding, with a smile, in allusion to Lord Elliot's having recently been raised to the peerage, 'I did not think a young lord could have mentioned to me a book in the English history that was not known to me."

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CHAPTER V.

DE LA RIVIERE MANLEY.

One of the many hundreds of noble-hearted Englishmen who did and suffered much for Charles I., and received nothing in return, save a careless "thank you," from Charles II., was Sir Roger Manley. He was governor of Guernsey, or one of the small islands thereabouts; and besides being all that a pun on his name proclaimed him, he was a soldier and a writer of no ordinary merit. He published a Latin work, "Commentaria de Rebellione Anglicanâ ab anno 1640 ad annum 1685," and "A History of the late Wars of Denmark."

This good knight had for one of his children a daughter, named De la Riviere. In what year this lady was born the present historian cannot state positively. Perhaps she intended there should be somewhat of mystery on the point; ladies have been known to object to having their ages made common talk. But as Swift mentioned her in his journal to Stella as "about forty," in the January of 1712, we can, in this case, make a sufficiently accurate guess.

Sir Roger died when his two daughters were still young, and dying he left them to the guardianship of their first cousin, whom he had reared like a son, and benefited with unwearied care. This nephew accepted the trust, and acquitted himself of it by feigning that his wife was dead, and begging De la Riviere to take her place. The girl accepted the offer—was married—and was then cast off by the villain who had ruined her.

As her misfortunes had made her an especially fit object

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for commiseration and tenderness, the world treated her with disdain and neglect. At this juncture the Duchess of Cleveland (Charles the Second's mistress) chanced to meet the poor woman, conceived a liking for her, and took her into her warm friendship for full six months, and then broke with her. General Tidcourb now took pity (let us hope his sympathy was pure of aught unworthy) on De la Riviere, and invited her to his country seat. She declined to avail herself of his goodness; and retiring to a seclusion of her own choosing, devoted herself to study and writing. The fruit of her application was a tragedy, called "The Royal Mischief," which was acted at the Theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields, in 1696, seven years after the death of Aphara Behn. In 1696 appeared also another of her dramas, "The Lover Lost; or the Jealous Husband." And in 1717, her "Lucius"—to which Steele wrote the prologue, and Prior the epilogue—was represented. But it was by her novels that she achieved her reputation; "Bath Intrigues," in four letters; "A Stage Coach Journey to Exeter," in eight letters to a friend; "The Secret History of Queen Zarah, from her Birth to the conclusion of her Reign;" "The Adventures of Rivella;" "Secret Memoirs and Manners of several persons of quality of both sexes,' from New Atalantis, an island in the Mediterranean, written originally in Italian, and translated from the third edition of the French; "Memoirs of Europe, towards the close of the Eighteenth Century," written by Olgismodus, secretary and favourite to Charlemagne, and done into English by the translator of the "New Atalantis;" and "Court Intrigues," in a collection of original letters from the island of New Atalantis, by the author of those memoirs.

Such are the names of the best known of her productions. The "New Atalantis" made a great noise in the world. It is an immoral performance, and could have proceeded

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from no woman not of vicious tastes. The work was a compilation of all the most displeasing scandals of the British Court; only the authoress was prudent enough to screen herself from punishment, by giving fictitious names to the real actors and places, of which her story treated. No one was spared. Her personal enemies, and her political foes (the Whigs), were lashed with severity: but none met with mercy, the turning whom to ridicule could make the book more amusing. The great men in power were furious. The printer and publisher were seized under a warrant, from the Secretary of State, Lord Sunderland. On this, De la Riviere heroically gave herself up, appearing before the Court of King's Bench as the author. Lord Sunderland wanted to know who had supplied her with the information for her publication. She supposed "*inspiration* had guided her, because knowing her innocence, she could account for it in no other way." His lordship returned, that "inspiration used to be on a good account; but that her writings were stark naught." To this the lady retorted, that "his lordship's observation might be true; but as there were evil angels, as well as good, that what she had wrote might still be by inspiration." His lordship, being thus foiled, ordered her to be locked up; and she was confined in a messenger's house without pen, ink, or paper. But her counsel, suing out her "*habeas corpus*" at the King's Bench bar, she was admitted to bail. Eventually, proceedings were dropped; but not till she had several times opposed the court, before the bench of judges.

Having escaped thus easily, in the case of the "New Atalantis," she continued to write on the same plan. In "The Adventures of Rivella," which is her autobiography she gave her version of all the incidents and contentions of her life, only throwing over the discreditable revelations the flimsy covering of false names. "The Secret History

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of Queen Zarah," is the history of the notorious *Sarah*, Duchess of Marlborough. Her grace's maiden name was Jennings; so Queen Zarah's mother's name is Jenisa. In the same way, celebrated characters are dealt with in the "Memoirs of Europe," and "Court Intrigues."

Little can be said in praise of these works. They contain in a most active and mischievous form, all the vicious qualities of "the Satirist." Certain passages they have which display agreeable powers of description, but they are never employed, save when the writer desires to embellish a picture peculiarly offensive to decency. It would be difficult to find in the whole course of English literature, Lord Rochester and his fraternity not excepted, an author so immoral, and so delighting in voluptuous license as De la Riviere Manley. She imitated and caricatured the worst points of Aphara Behn, and must ever be a name used to support the position that pre-eminent amongst the vicious scribes of every nation, are women.

Besides her works of fiction (founded on fact), Mrs. Manley was a political writer under the guidance of Swift. A very able "Vindication of the Duke of Marlborough," came from her pen. And when Swift relinquished "The Examiner," it was the authoress of the "New Atalantis" who succeeded him in its management.

In her life, as in her writings, Mrs. Manley followed in the footsteps of Mrs. Behn. Avowedly a woman of pleasure and intrigue, she passed from one lover to another, received bountiful measures of flattery from a large circle of admirers, and spent her days in that dissipation which was the mode of the age. Swift, in his journal to Stella, continually made mention of her, but scarcely ever without associating her name with ombre, claret, and jolly evenings.

In that celebrated diary, kept by the Dean, there is a passage worth reading. "Jan. 28, 1711-12. Poor Mrs. Manley, the author, is very ill of a dropsy and sore leg: the

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printer tells me he is afraid she cannot live long. I am heartily sorry for her: she has very generous principles for one of her sort, and a great deal of good sense and invention; she is about forty: very homely and very fat.'

De la Riviere did not regard herself with the Dean's eyes, if we may trust her own description of her personal charms in "The Adventures of Rivella." By the bye, it is worth taking some trouble to get hold of the "Adventures," if it be only to admire the frontispiece, a picture of Somerset House, and the garden in which stand the Chevalier d'Aumont, and Sir Charles Lovemore conversing about Rivella, and enjoying the breeze which comes from the Thames, in which river are swimming two swans with exquisitely graceful necks. The passage alluded to is the following:—

"Her person is neither tall nor short; from her youth she was inclined to fat, whence I have often heard her flatterers liken her to the Grecian Venus. It is certain, considering that disadvantage, she has the most easy air that one can have; her hair is of a pale ash colour, fine, and in large quantity. I have heard her friends lament the disaster of her having had the small-pox in such an injurious manner, being a beautiful child before that distemper; but as that disease has now left her face, she has scarce any pretence to it. Few, who have only beheld her in public, could be brought to like her; whereas none that had been acquainted with her could refrain from loving her. I have heard several wives and mistresses accuse her of fascination; they would neither trust their husbands, lovers, sons, nor brothers, with her acquaintance, upon terms of the greatest advantage. But to do Rivella justice, till she grew fat, there was not, I believe, any defect to be found in her body; her lips admirably coloured, her teeth small and even; a breath always sweet: her complexion fair and fresh; yet with all this, you must be used to her before she can be thought thoroughly agreeable. Her hands and arms have been publicly cele-

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brated: it is certain, that I never saw any so well turned; her neck and breasts have an established reputation for beauty and colour; her feet small and pretty."

And it was this fascinating Rivella, with a neck of "an established reputation," that the Dean could write of as "very homely, and very fat." Was he honest? Or, did he artfully assume a tone of kindly contempt, so that dear little Stella might not be jealous?

On the eleventh of July, 1724, De la Riviere expired at the house of Alderman Barber (with whom she had been living for years) on Lambeth Hill. She was interred in the middle aisle of the church of St. Bennet, Paul's Wharf, where a marble stone was erected to her memory.

Why has this poor woman been dragged up from the grave with all her sins hanging loosely about her like her cerements, and been made to figure before the correct public of our own day? Because, though not a writer of the highest genius or acquirements, she made her influence felt amongst writers of fiction. From her, Swift took many a hint for elaborating his "Gulliver's Travels," in satirizing the foibles and vices of the men and parties amongst whom he lived, and gratified his inordinate passion for hating. The Dean was not indebted more to "Rabelais" than he was to Mrs. Manley. And, without doubt, the "New Atalantis" was the parent of Smollett's admirable political satire, "the Adventures of an Atom."—Again it was Mrs. Manley who brought into fashion the plan of writing novels in the form of letters. Probably, she was first instigated to construct letters for publication by the popularity of the amatory epistles between our old friend Astrea and Lycidas. The scheme was good; Eliza Heywood (whose "Court of Arimania," and "New Utopia," are imitations of the Mrs. Manley's "New Atalantis,") Smollett, Richardson, and a host of others, adopted it. And it is in the correspondential shape that we have some of the best achievements of Mr. Thackeray.

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CHAPTER VI.

HENRY FIELDING.

"Our immortal Fielding," says Gibbon, "was of the younger branch of the Earls of Denbigh, who drew their origin from the Counts of Hapsburgh, the lineal descendants of Eltrico, in the seventh century, Dukes of Alsace. Far different have been the fortunes of the English and German divisions of the family of Hapsburgh; the former, the knights and sheriffs of Leicestershire, have slowly risen to the dignity of a peerage. The latter, the Emperors of Germany and Kings of Spain, have threatened the liberty of the old, and invaded the treasures of the New World. The successors of Charles V. may disdain their brethren of England; but the romance of 'Tom Jones,' that exquisite picture of human manners, will outlive the palace of the Escurial, and the Imperial eagle of Austria."

Henry Fielding was born April 22, 1707, at Sharpham Park, near Glastonbury, in Somersetshire. The man who is generally known as "the father of the English Novel" was a babe puling in his long clothes, when Jonathan Swift, Alexander Pope, Richard Steele, and Joseph Addison, were in the prime of their days, between thirty-five and forty years of age. He was a young gentleman unusually precocious in his "habits," if he was breeched by the time Sir Roger was introduced by the "Spectator" into the families of our ancestors. His father, Lieut-General Fielding, a grandson of the first Earl of Denbigh, was guilty of matrimony no less than four times, and had as large a family as he deserved.

Little Harry Fielding was placed, while yet in very

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tender years, under the dominion of a clergyman who treated him according to the light of the age—certainly no better. The pupil squealed and cried out the period of torture, and in after life took the sweet vengeance of making the pedagogue one of the most contemptible and absurd characters in "Joseph Andrews." A long list might be made out of men of letters who paid off in this coin their early "foes of the rod."

It was not long, however, before the child was picked out of the frying-pan and put into the fire; he was removed from the despotic sway of the Rev. Mr. Oliver, and placed at Eton, where he had an agreeable change of tyrants, and for schoolmates, Lord Lyttleton, Mr. Fox, Mr. Pitt, Sir Charles Hanbury Williams, and Mr. Wilmington. A goodly band! The foundation of the fame of the *great orator* exists almost entirely in tradition; "Jonathan Wild" and "Amelia" are ours at this day, and improved by the keeping.

On leaving Eton he went in his eighteenth year to the university of Leyden, to study law. If we are to believe his biographers, he made great advances in legal learning, and was a most industrious pupil. As we cannot prove anything directly in opposition, it would be unworthy to pick holes in so fair a reputation; but it is no easy task to conceive of Henry Fielding, in his nineteenth year, as a model youth. That our nation was well and favourably represented by him, amongst the lads of the university, there can be no doubt; for he was a magnificent fellow, frank in bearing, agile as a trained wrestler, rather exceeding six feet in height, with a face both by aristocratic features and gallant expression remarkably engaging, with a fresh, slightly ruddy complexion, and a winning smile of the most mirthful intelligence, with an air, commanding, but free from the slightest taint of haughtiness, and lastly, with a disposition, as well endowed as his mind,—generous and truly noble as became one sprung from the seed of kings!

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He did not, however, continue long at Leyden. His father of course had never a guinea for him, and life cannot be maintained even at a German university without a slight influx of coin: so the lad was compelled to stop short in his course of education and return to England in 1727.

Immediately upon his appearance in London he commenced writing for the stage, and was received into the best society. His old schoolfellow, Lord Lyttleton, became his firm ally: men of letters received him as one of their body; the Dukes of Richmond, Roxburgh, and Argyle were amongst his acquaintances. Professedly he was a gentleman upon town, living on a modest, but ample, allowance paid him by his father. For the lieut.-general liberally *promised* him £200 per annum, but, probably because he saw that his son would get just as deep in debt with an income as without one, omitted to pay that sum, or any part of it. Young Harry was not at all annoyed at the non-appearance of his allowance; he made it a subject for a laugh, as he did of all, even the most vexatious circumstances of his life. But funds must be had somewhere. Clearly he must get them by his pen; so to work he falls at play-writing, as though it were the easiest work imaginable. In his twentieth year (1727) he produced his first comedy "Love in several masques," in the next year, 1728, (the year in which Oliver Goldsmith was born) he brought out "The Temple Beau," and before his thirtieth year he had composed eighteen theatrical pieces, besides a few which appeared to the world some time after they were written. In this century he would have constructed a brilliant—perchance mystic—novel, in three volumes, or have obtained a connection with the journals, and dashed off articles of satiric vehemence. He had no especial power for dramatic writing, it would appear that he was scarcely ambitious of success; he applied himself to it because it was the best literary work society offered him.

He managed to achieve tolerable earnings, but, of course,

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he spent a great deal more than he won, for he had a predilection for magnificence, and was a feature of the fashionable world. The richness and splendour of his laced suits, and the lavish manner in which he scattered his money—when he had any—were remarkable. Bucks felt it was impossible to vie with him, and paid themselves for their mortification, when his back was turned, by picking holes in his reputation; but their ill-humour could not stand before the audacious frolic of the young man who mimicked and ridiculed their fine airs (as they yawned out, "Positively Bill, I protest;" "May I perish everlastingly;" "'Pon honour;" "D—— me,") and then, clapping them on the back, took them off to spend a jolly evening. None could long be foes with him. His triumph over the good-will of his associates was complete; men of his own years, and even his seniors, proclaimed him their chief. In the coffee-room his joke was waited for—but never for long,* and always elicited roars of applause. On one occasion, in a conversation on the comparative merits of certain great wits—of Congreve, Pope, Swift, Addison—Lord Lyttleton cried out that "Harry Fielding had more wit and humour than all the persons they had been speaking of, put together." These compliments to the lad were repeated, and were anything but pleasing to those of the old school who were alive to hear them. Had they grown to such gigantic stature and strength, only to be hurled down by a stripling armed with a sling and a stone? In due time came the Dean's vindictive snarl:

> "For instance, when you rashly think
> No rhymer can like Wellsted sink,
> His merits balanc'd you shall find
> That Fielding leaves him far behind."

* A good and well-known story of the readiness of Fielding's wit is told. "Being one day in company with the Earl of Denbigh, and it being noticed that Fielding was also of the Denbigh family, the Earl asked him the reason why they spelt their names differently: the Earl spelling it with the E first (Feilding), and Henry Fielding with the I first. "I can't tell my lord," was the author's reply, "except it be that my branch of the family first learned how to spell."

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In a very brief space, young Fielding was most creditably involved in debt, but all the inconveniences of impecuniosity were to him merely sources of amusement, and he had vigorous hopes that the state would stand in need of his parts, and pay him liberally. In the year 1830, when only in his twenty-fourth year, he sent his famous epistle to Sir Robert Walpole.

"While at the helm of state you ride,
Our nation's envy and its pride;
While foreign courts with wonder gaze,
And curse those councils which they praise;
Would you not wonder, sir, to view
Your bard a greater man than you?
Which that he is, you cannot doubt,
When you have read the sequel out.

You know, great sir, that ancient fellows,
Philosophers, and such folks tell us,
No great analogy between
Greatness and happiness is seen.
If then, as it might follow straight,
Wretched to be, is to be great;
Forbid it, Gods, that you should try
What 'tis to be so great as I.

The family that dines the latest,
Is in our street esteem'd the greatest;
But latest hours must surely fall
'Fore him who never dines at all.

Your taste in architect, you know,
Hath been admired by friend and foe;
But can your earthly domes compare
With all my castles—in the air?

We're often taught, it doth behove us
To think those greater who're above us;
Another instance of my glory,
Who live above you twice two story;
And from my garret can look down
On the whole street of Arlington.
Greatness by posts still is painted
With many followers acquainted;
This, too, doth in my favour speak;
Your levee is but twice a week;
From mine I can exclude but one day,
My door is quiet on a Sunday.
Nor in the manner of attendance,
Doth your great bard claim less ascendance.

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Familiar you to admiration
May be approached by all the nation;
While I, like the Mogul in Indo,
Am never seen but at my window.
If with my greatness you're offended,
The fault is easily amended;
For I'll come down, with wondrous ease,
Into whatever *place* you please.

I am not ambitious, little matters
Will serve us great, but humble creatures.
Suppose a secretary o' this isle,
Just to be doing with a while;
Admiral, gen'ral, judge, or bishop;
Or I can foreign treaties dish up.
If the good genius of the nation
Should call me to negociation,
Tuscan and *French* are in my head,
Latin I write, and Greek—I read.

If you should ask, what pleases best?
To get the most, and do the least.
What fittest for?—You know, I'm sure,
I'm fittest for—a sinecure."

The application was, however, of no avail. Perhaps Sir Robert thought it was best to let well alone, and not take so joyous a poet out of his proper element. The days came when Fielding bore no good-will to the great statesman, for in "Pasquin," which was acted for the first time in April, 1736, and in "The Historical Register for the year 1736" which was first acted in 1737, Sir Robert Walpole is treated with severity. One of Fielding's dramatic pieces called "The Golden Rump," was taken possession of by Sir Robert, just in time to prevent its public representation. It afterwards came into the hands of Horace Walpole, who rendered filial respect to his father's memory by speaking of Fielding on all possible occasions with contempt and aversion. That he really had a low opinion of Fielding's merits, there is no room for doubt, but then, it should not be forgotten that he thought Richardson "stupid," and Smollett "a worthless man," whose history was, "trash," and that while he held Mr. W. Whitehead, Sir Chas. H. Williams, and Mr. Soame Jenyns to be amongst the first English

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writers, he could thus speak of Dr. Johnson, "with a lumber of learning and some strong parts, Johnson was an odious and mean character. By principle a Jacobite, arrogant, self-sufficient, and overbearing by nature, ungrateful through pride, and of feminine bigotry, he had prostituted his pen to party, even in a dictionary, and had afterwards, for a pension, contradicted his own definitions. His manners were as sordid, supercilious, and brutal, his style ridiculously bombastic and vicious, and, in one word, with all the pedantry, he had all the gigantic littleness of a country school-master." There is in this description just enough truth to make the venom poisonous. Walpole's judgments on his contemporaries are very amusing. More than mere good fun, it is to see him pause in the narrative of his history, and explain to posterity, that Fielding was "a favourite author of the age."

To Fielding's plays no greater praise is due than that which is bestowed by saying they were up to the average of the time, though immeasurably inferior to Congreve's, and others of the previous age. The author took no pains to make them good ones, for he used to dash them off without consideration, under the spur of poverty, and frequently on the paper in which his tobacco had been wrapt. The applause they got he knew they did not merit, and consequently thought the town composed of fools incapable of discerning the faults of his productions. On one occasion this contempt was the cause of disaster. Garrick, then a young man, begged Fielding, when "The Wedding Day" was in rehearsal, to cut out a certain very objectionable passage. "No d—— 'em," replied the author, "if the scene is not a good one, let them find that out." So the piece was presented without alteration, and, as had been foreseen, the house expressed with vehement hissing, their displeasure with the bad passage. Garrick hurried from the stage to the green room, where he found Fielding over a not full

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bottle of champagne, and with streams of tobacco juice trickling from the corners of his mouth. "What's the matter, Garrick? what are they hissing now?"

"Why, the scene I begged you to retrench. I knew it would not do; and they have so frightened me, that I shall not be able to collect myself again the whole night."

"Oh, damn 'em," replied Fielding coolly, "they *have* found it out, have they?"

A most characteristic story is told of Voltaire's conduct upon the first representation of his "Œdipe." He was at that time a youth plunged in the wild excesses of the French capital, and was so little fearful of failure or anxious for success, that he appeared on the stage, carrying in mockery the train of the High Priest. Madame la Maréchale de Villars, then the leader of Parisian fashion, asked who that young man was, who appeared as if trying to have the play damned. On being told that the young man was the author himself, she was so delighted with his reckless daring, that she ordered him to be presented to her. Fielding was scarcely less audacious than the boy-writer of the "Œdipe." However, Fielding was not a stripling when the "Wedding Day" appeared, for the first representation of that play was years subsequent to the author's marriage.

In the twenty-seventh year of his age (A.D., 1734) he married a Miss Cradock, and set up as a country squire in Dorsetshire. The funds he had for this most laudable purpose were £1,500 (his bride's fortune), and the small estate at Stower, on which he resided, and which, when he first inherited it from his mother, was worth £200 per annum. Fielding's plan of life, when he married the lovely woman (the original of his heroine, Amelia), was a wise one. He wished to pass in the country a life of easy exertion in literature, diversified by such amusements as his means could compass. He had a vision before him of performing certain great works, more worthy of record than the come-

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dies and farces of which his pen had already been so prolific —"works which might obtain a more permanent hold upon the public favour." With his wife, to whom he was ever passionately devoted, and those dear babes he trusted soon to have, he would lead a simple and a worthy life; but unfortunately he did not keep his good resolution.

He had that £1,500 in hand, and he was forced to get rid of it. So the young couple set up their coach; at first they drove it moderately, but, ere they had finished, furiously. Dogs, horses, cases upon cases of choice wines, and those many "jolly good fellows," who scent such a battle-field from afar, found their way into the squire's modest residence, which was now made to do the duty of a baronial hall. The servants of the establishment were made to figure in yellow liveries, which got dirty, and had to be renewed almost every month. Just as Beau Fielding, whose inimitable picture, by Dr. Doran, we are all familiar with, and have laughed over dozens of times, wasted his treasures in the purchase of Austrian liveries, so did Henry convert his coin into gear of the same hue. It is almost incredible, and yet true, that Fielding was such an utter fool as to squander, in the short space of three years, his wife's fortune and his own little estate, down to the last penny. There is the very essence of the ridiculous in this royal money-spending spirit in a man with not five hundred pounds a-year. "I and the Hapsburgs—confound the expense—more liveries!" This absurd conduct has an historical interest, and gives us a strange insight into the times, full as much as into the man. The veriest young idiot now-a-days, unless at the universities, or in the army, would—ay, *could* not so dissipate his means. A young married man who commenced doing so would be cried shame of the whole country over, and would be whipped into some slight appearance of honesty. But that Fielding, the clear-headed, sagacious man, should so run amuck! Of course he bitterly repented his madness in

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after life; and (what is not equally a matter of course) he had the manfulness to take all the blame to himself, and to declare his wife had no share in the guilt.

In his thirtieth year, Fielding found himself penniless, *without* a profession (save authorship), and *with* a wife and young children. Already the life of excess, which he, in common with gentlemen of that time, led, had made cruel inroads into his constitution. Late hours, much drinking and feasting, violent corporeal exercise, continual excitement, and *hard study* (for Fielding in the most idle passages of his life was always *at work*) had shaken his noble frame. But his spirits were fresh as a child's. If he were downcast for one hour, during the next eleven he was the happiest mortal on the face of the earth; and in his poor lodging he was as blessed with his darling wife, who saw nothing but the heroic in him, notwithstanding all his errors, as a king on a throne.

Under these circumstances Fielding determined to go to the Bar. Without delay, he entered himself a student at the Inner Temple, and applied assiduously to legal studies, and omitted no opportunity of making business connections. It was a change. In 1734 he married, and became a country gentleman (keeping up, however, an intimate alliance with the metropolis; for in 1735 he was manager of a company of comedians, who were intended to act under the title of "the Great Mogul's Company of Comedians," at the little theatre in the Haymarket)—and now in 1738 he was a law student.

In due time he was called to the Bar, and joined the Western Circuit. His success was not by any means great in his profession; but complete failure, except in purse, was out of the question with him. His dignified carriage and commanding, as well as conciliating air, ensured him a fair reception wherever he went. In those roistering times, when gentlemen, immediately they rose from bed, proceeded

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to make themselves tipsy, personal advantages were especially valuable. Any man, but one of more than ordinary comeliness and style, speedily began to wear a frowsy and mildewed aspect under the influence of continual toping. In this epoch of moderation a man's position in life is not marred by the curse of a weak stomach. The physical organization is mercifully permitted to husband its small resources—to keep the brain clear for study, and the poor nerves fit for action. But a hundred years ago the most unmerciful social laws existed, to which *all* were compelled to render obedience; and such an unintermitting jollity was the mode that none but very highly favoured mortals could bear it long. Sad days they were for that smug respectability which now is continually seen creeping into high places.

But Fielding's many mental and personal advantages did not gain him that golden harvest in the legal profession which he had hoped for. Thirty years is an advanced age for one commencing a vocation, even under the most favourable circumstances; and Fielding was not only half-a-dozen years senior to men of his own professional standing, but he was greatly their inferior in respect of health. His vigorous constitution and buoyant spirits had led him into excesses for which he was now to pay the penalty in the sufferings of an enfeebled frame. He soon found himself so weakened by gout, and perhaps by the first symptoms of that terrible malady which was the principal cause of his death, that he was incapable of the exertion of constant attendance at Westminster, and of appearance amongst men of his own calling. His ambition of acquiring competence at the Bar, he quickly discerned could never be realized. His pen was the only sure means he had of providing for his wife and children. In 1742 appeared his first novel, "Joseph Andrews." He commenced this by no means perfect production in a fit of healthy and violent ridicule of the in-

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delicate delicacy of Richardson's "Pamela," and it has all those faults which naturally came to it from the temper of the writer, as well as a full proportion of that inelegancy and stiffness which invariably mark an author (even an experienced one) when attempting a new style of composition. But in this novel there is much that is beautiful, as well as much that was indicative of Fielding's intimate knowledge of character and his power of depicting it; and there can be no doubt that we are deeply indebted to it, and all the circumstances that contributed to its existence. For, in working out that story, begun under the unamiable influence of contempt of another, Fielding discovered powers in himself that he had not thought in his possession; and discovered that which he had long been in search of—his proper work for mankind. In an insolence of mirth, which no one would now hesitate to call immoral, he began to sketch the fortunes of a young footman, placing such a hero, at the very outstart of the narrative, in a situation as disgusting as can well be conceived; but before he finished, to his great surprise, he caught himself writing about this servant's virtues and trials with earnestness, and with tearful eyes. He was no longer in uncertainty as to what should be the form of those "great works," the accomplishment of which he had often vaguely meditated.

Now the man had satisfied himself as to what his work ought to be, he did it with all his might. He was thirty-six years old; his health was so broken, that his life had become, like Pope's, "a long disease;" already he saw that his existence on earth could not be a long one, and the difficulties of poverty (which, if they stimulate the young and vigorous, depress those of enfeebled bodily powers more than almost any other calamity), stared him in the face; but all this mattered not; his duty lay before him, and that made all things clear and bright.

That which has made Fielding famous, was all achieved

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after the publication of "Joseph Andrews." His "Journey from this World to the Next," his "History of Jonathan Wild" (one of the most remarkable books in the literature of the world), "Tom Jones," and "Amelia," all followed his "satire on Pamela." Of these works, "Tom Jones" has been the most generally praised; "Jonathan Wild," has been generally regarded as a mere Newgate calendar sketch, which Fielding disgraced his respectability by drawing, (Sir Walter Scott has not hesitated to call it clumsy and inartificial); and "Amelia" has been spoken of with tolerance, rather than admiration. To us, "Amelia" has always appeared as greatly superior to "Tom Jones," and much of the particular approval bestowed on the latter work has seemed erroneous. In every encyclopædia or critical dictionary in which the merit of "Tom Jones" is discussed, the reader is told that one of its chief points of excellence is, that it contains no chapter that does not in some degree tend to the advancement of the story. Now, if it has one defect more cruel to the reader than another, it is to be found in the continual digression from the narrative, and the obtrusion of matter not necessary to the tale; one of the more frequent forms of which latter fault is the way in which Fielding, after placing his characters in a position of great interest, which any fairly intelligent person can immediately account for, goes back to the past, and explains with wearisome prolixity *how* the position was brought about —a plan by which the story is delayed, and the reader is deprived of a field for the exercise of his own imagination. But it is not difficult to account for any unreasonable praise the world bestowed on "Tom Jones." Men were delighted with it on its first appearance: a *new* source of enjoyment had been discovered by an original genius, and they were happy—even those who felt it wrong to acknowledge the "new" could be "good." After the first tumult of their gratification had subsided, the curious began to ask

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for the causes of their excitement, and when *curious* gentlemen set about answering a question, and happen at the same time to be of a slightly dogmatic tendency, they are apt to utter strange doctrine; and all doctrine, when once uttered with a loud and authoritative voice, is sure to be repeated and, in time, if it only be proclaimed again and again, gets the stamp of orthodoxy placed on it. If, however, many of the suggestions advanced to *account* for the wide popularity of "Tom Jones" are absurd, never was book the parent of a more rational enthusiasm. Byron so admired it, that he denominated its author "the prose Homer of human nature." Coleridge said of it, "There is a cheerful, sunshiny, breezy spirit that prevails everywhere, strongly contrasted with the close, hot, day-dreaming continuity of Richardson." Charles Lamb loved the harum-scarum hero of the novel as he did every one who was genuine. And Goethe applauded the author as "artistic." It is satisfactory to know, that Fielding obtained a considerable though, when compared with the work, insignificant sum for his great fiction. Millar, the bookseller, gave him 600*l.* for the copyright, and on its great success, sent him an additional 100*l.*

Millar was so well pleased with his bargain for "Tom Jones" that he gave Fielding 1,000*l.* for "Amelia," which novel was published in 1751, when its author was in his *forty-sixth* year. This, his last novel, has always appeared to us very superior to "Tom Jones," although one of his biographers complacently asserts that it is pregnant with symptoms of the setting sun, *i.e.*, decay of the intellect. It is not, perhaps, of a construction so adapted to please pedantic critics; there are no philosophic chapters initiatory to different books; there is less reference throughout the work to classic models and classic authority than in its precursor; but it shows a greater knowledge of our human nature, more especially of that which is noble and of that which is

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mean in men, and of that which is best in woman—their gentleness, their purity, their devotion to the good, their unconscious greatness; and everywhere an artistic facility is displayed, which is not so fully evinced in the author's previous writings.

Lady Mary Wortley Montague said, "there was a great similarity between his character (Fielding's) and that of Sir Richard Steele. He had the advantage of learning, and, in my opinion, genius." Of Steele, Mr. Thackeray, to whose writings we are very deeply indebted for instruction—and not on this subject only—has observed: "Posterity has been kinder to this amiable creature; all women especially are bound to be grateful to Steele, as he was the first of our writers who really seemed to admire and respect them. * * * * Of a woman whom Congreve had also admired and celebrated, Steele says, that 'to have loved her was a liberal education!'" This side of Fielding's character, his love of woman, as the *best* as well as the most beautiful of God's creatures, appears most forcibly in "Amelia." In "Tom Jones," he evidently intended Sophia to be an example of the gentle, simple, high-minded girl. He always introduces her with some such reverential gesture as a priest might make when taking the veil from before the image of his God; and *she* never is guilty of an act calculated to raise in us any hostile feelings; but still she neither says nor does aught to arouse our admiration. Indeed, except on one occasion, she never gives expression to a sentiment that might not as well have emanated from a well-conducted waiting-maid. Fielding never allows her to talk, and insists emphatically on her excellent modesty in never opposing her superiors, and in taking her opinions *from* men. Perhaps he mistrusted his power to delineate a young girl's mind, her generous confiding love, her thousand sunny fancies and winning ways; perhaps he deemed himself, tainted as he was with the grossness of his tavern-haunting

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age, unworthy to attempt such a subject. If this diffidence restrained his pen when delineating his Sophia, it did not fetter the historian of Amelia. The love he bore to the original of his heroine gave him nerve to utter forth his fervid poetry; for "Amelia" was the true womanly creature, dead ere he painted the picture, who had been the wife of his manhood and the mother of his babes; the woman with whom he had run a course of ostentatious extravagance in the short three first years of their married life, and who in his long after-struggle had cheered him with that deep tenderness which is woman's peculiar gift. At times he had lacked in consideration for her; but his lively conscience, and not her words, had always made him repent and ask forgiveness with manly tears. She always granted the pardon with an assurance that she had nothing to overlook in him; for she knew he so loved her he could not really wrong her.

An artist at his work is ever a fit object of reverence; and to us there is something truly affecting in the thought of Fielding employed in describing the virtues of his dead wife and his own sad errings; the drops stealing down his manly cheeks as his pen goes faster and faster! More recent and most accomplished writers have refined on Fielding's art, and have discovered many tricks of handling, unknown to him; and modern taste, happily different from that of a century back, will not permit the novelist to treat of many topics which are freely discussed in the pages of Fielding; but all the change of time has not robbed "Amelia" of its interest. Dr. Johnson read it through, lengthy as it is, at a single sitting; and we at this time, though we smile at obsolete forms of endearment, and are shocked at the broadness, even coarseness, of many expressions in constant use in its leaves, are not less charmed. Women may like the story well enough, and be pleased with it; but 'tis to men that it especially speaks, and 'tis

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the very best of men who are the most affected by it. As long as there are simple, generous men with selfishness and moral infirmity enough to act at times in contradiction to their purer judgment, so long will there be men like Fielding to make the full confession of a broken and a contrite heart to the compassion of good women.

There is, too, in this "Amelia," to whatever part of it we turn, a manifestation of the placid benevolence and unobtrusive magnanimity of Fielding's nature; into whatever company he takes us we feel we are in the society of one of Nature's true gentlemen. There is in the man such a lively sense of the good, and on all occasions he pays such manly obeisance to honesty, and gives so gracefully his protection to the weak. The *littleness* of human follies, of the poor contentions and animosities of sinful men, is not a phrase on his lips, but a sentiment which colours all his pictures of vice, and softens his language when giving his moral lessons. His eye never falls on empty pretension but he immediately sets to work to pull down such sham greatness; still, he cannot work himself into the fury of hate for such a paltry antagonist; the weapon with which he chastises it is not angry invective, but a humour that smiles up at the wayfarer like a flower in the dew; however cruel may be the wrong that he regards, he cannot help viewing it with relation to the nobility of that humanity which effected it, and then so smitten is he with commiseration for the sinner that, with Othello, he exclaims—"The pity of it."

Fielding's character has been assailed by all those unfair means which are always brought to bear against a satirist by those to whom he is obnoxious. Every writer who attacks the vices of society must make up his mind to have many (and sometimes amiable people) judge him as one, the hue of whose picture of life comes from his own jaundiced eye, and whose professions of devout aspiration ought only to be regarded as polite apologies to offended decency.

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The rebuked impenitent finds the satisfaction of revenge in so representing his castigator; and to simple, kindly-hearted mortals it is less painful to believe in the existence of one writer of diseased mind than in the existence of the many bad characters of whom he speaks. To make the charge in Fielding's case wear a more than usual appearance of truth the displeasing features of his private life were dragged before the world; his fondness for the bottle (at a time when every gentleman of position was daily intoxicated), and his dissipated habits and extravagance (when the recklessness of tavern excess pervaded all ranks of London society) were pointed to as proof of guilt in the accused. There are not many people now to be found in the world who would mention Fielding as an immoral writer, or as beneath the moral standard of his age in his actions; there are few who would not advance that the exact reverse was the case. What Coleridge said, when speaking of the morality of "Tom Jones," is noteworthy. "If I want a servant or mechanic, I wish to know what he does, but of a friend I must know what he is. And in no writer is this momentous distinction so finely brought forward as by Fielding." By this light we must regard Fielding, both as a writer and a man. In his books we find that the *manners* of polite society in his day were scarcely more like those of our time than are the fashions of the West End this year like those of Shoreditch; the vices of Blanche Amory and Lady Kew are of our time; the depraved tastes of Lady Bellaston were the faults of Fielding's age. They both alike required exposure and chastisement; why, then, should a Jack Ketch ignominy attach to him who did then, or to any one who does now, perform the duties of executioner? Who dares say that the frailties, of which Fielding makes "Tom Jones" the subject (and the author always mentions them as serious defects), are really greater than those which disfigure the

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comeliness of our promising young men? It was Fielding's duty to speak truths, and he did so; but we never find him exulting in a lamentable one. He viewed the misconduct of his heroes with as quick a displeasure as we do; but he loved them, as we love them, in spite of what they did, for what *they were*. 'Tis the same with the man. We do not, because he committed grave faults (who does not commit many?) cease to love him; we do not seize hold of his misdeeds and proceed to measure their enormity; but we gaze at his virtues, his disinterested devotion to the good, his sympathy with the weak, his healthy discernment of what was admirable in the high-born and the humble, and his detestation of what was mean in both; and when at length we turn away, it is to look for such a one for our friend. Where shall we find him?

The year before the publication of "Amelia," Fielding, then in his forty-fourth year, and so worn out in health as to require constant nursing, was appointed to the bench of acting magistrates of Westminster; a post requiring great exertion from its occupant, and to which was attached but little pay, but an almost boundless privilege of benefiting by corruption. The last four years of his life were spent in the prosecution of the arduous and even disgusting duties of his office. He had to arbitrate for the poor, to adjudicate on the squabbles of the lowest refuse of the Westminster population, and to protect the oppressed—a work which such a man could not carelessly perform. One of his predecessors made £1,000 per annum in the place: but Fielding, who would never receive a penny not legally due to him from the poor wretches who came as accusers and accused before him, never achieved an income beyond a bare £350. He received a small pension, in addition to this amount, from the Government; but he was still a poor man, for his family was considerable, and he had contracted a second marriage. His

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second wife was an excellent woman in disposition and mental capacity, who had been the devoted servant of his first wife; she was a person qualified to attract and attach any man of superior discernment and taste, and so intimately united was she to Fielding's affections, by her love for her late mistress and the children, that Fielding's making her his wife was a natural step, and therefore pleasing for us to contemplate. Small as his means were, many men would have found them ample: but he was a bad economist, he was too prone to give a guinea where he gave a tear; he would surrender to a friend the entire sum of money he had with difficulty raised to pay his arrears of taxes; and when his pocket was full of money he spent it with lordly magnificence. He was therefore put, at times, in the undignified positions with which poverty abounds. The refined Horace Walpole exulted over every fresh proof he could obtain of Fielding's being in want of money. That gentleman of letters informs us that two friends of his, Rigby and Peter Bathurst, bursting into Fielding's apartment, in opposition to the servant's request, found the author of "Amelia" supping with *a blind man, three Irishmen*, and another bad character, on some *cold mutton* and a *bone of ham*, which viands were displayed on a very dirty cloth; Fielding looked haughtily at the intruders, but they did not care, for one had seen Fielding "*come to beg a guinea of Sir C. H. Williams*," and the father of the other had often given Fielding a dinner, or, as Horace Walpole expresses it, "*victuals*." I can pardon the cold mutton and the bone of ham; a lenient judge may pass over the fact of the three Irishmen,—but how could Fielding so far forget himself as to admit a *blind* man to his table?—especially as this blind man was his brother, afterwards Sir John Fielding, who succeeded him in his magisterial office.

Fortunately, Fielding had a friend more generous than

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Horace Walpole was uncharitable in his enmity. Ralph Allen, of Prior Park, of whom Pope made the beautiful and well-known couplet,—

> "Let humble Allen, with an awkward shame,
> Do good by stealth, and blush to find it fame;"

and of whom Dr. Grainger spoke in his "Ode to Solitude,"

> "Nor yet unrecompensed are virtue's pains,
> Good Allen lives, and bounteous Brunswick reigns,"

was ever ready to assist him, and even sent him a present of £200 at one time, before he was personally acquainted with him. This good Allen, at his death some ten years after Fielding's decease, left to Mrs. Fielding and her children £100 a year each.

Labour as a magistrate, and continued exertions as a political journalist, soon told on Fielding. Dropsy in its most aggravated form, gout, and jaundice, assisted by other maladies, brought him down to a condition of most pitiful distress. He became emaciated and pallid; his fine form was bent with weakness, and at times he could scarcely stand on his limbs. "In the beginning of August, 1753, when I had taken the Duke of Portland's medicine, as it is called, near a year, the effects of which had been the carrying off the symptoms of a lingering, imperfect gout, I was persuaded by Mr. Ranby, the King's premier serjeant-surgeon, and the ablest advice, I believe, in all branches of the physical profession, to go immediately to Bath. I accordingly writ that very night, to Mrs. Bowden, who, by the next post, informed me she had taken me a lodging for a month certain.

"Within a few days after this, whilst I was preparing for my journey, and when I was almost fatigued to death with several long examinations relating to five different murders, all committed within the space of a week by different gangs of street-robbers, I received a message from his Grace the Duke of Newcastle, by Mr. Carrington, the King's messenger, to attend his Grace the next morning, in Lincoln's Inn

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Fields, upon some business of importance; but I excus
myself from complying with the message, as, besides bei
lame, I was very ill, with the great fatigues I had late
undergone, added to my distemper.

"His Grace, however, sent Mr. Carrington, the very ne
morning, with another summons, with which, though in t
utmost distress, I immediately complied; but the Duk
happening, unfortunately for me, to be then particularly e
gaged, after I had waited some time, sent a gentleman
discourse with me on the best plan which could be invente
for putting an immediate end to those murders and robberi
which were every day committed in the streets; upon whic
I promised to transmit my opinion, in writing to his Grac
who, as the gentleman informed me, intended to lay it befo
the Privy Council.

"Though this visit cost me a very severe cold, I, no
withstanding, set myself down to work; and in about fou
days sent the Duke as regular a plan as I could form, wit
all the reasons and arguments I could bring to support i
drawn out in several sheets of paper; and soon received
message from the Duke by Mr. Carrington, acquainting m
that my plan was highly approved of."

Fancy it! Fielding, sick to death, having to wait in on
of the outer rooms of that mean, shuffling imbecile, th
Duke of Newcastle! His Grace was the man whos
soubriquet, given him by Sir R. Walpole, was "Perfidy;" o
whom H. Fox, the first Lord Holland, said, "he has n
friends and deserves none;" whom Lord Halifax used t
revile as "a knave and fool;" of whom Lord Wilmington
said, "the Duke of Newcastle always loses half-an-hour i
the morning, which he is running after the rest of the da
without being able to overtake it;" and to whom Pitt said
"fewer words, my lord, if you please, for your words hav
long lost all weight with me." For a term of years, wanting
little of half a century, he held some of the highest appoint-

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ments in the state, and was addressed in his capacity of Chancellor of the University of Cambridge, by Robert Lloyd, as "*Aonii duxque decusque chori*," and yet when he was Secretary of State for the Southern Department he used to address letters to "the island of New England," and could not tell but that Jamaica was in the Mediterranean. When General Ligonier hinted to him that Annapolis ought to be defended, he replied with a lisping hurry, "Annapolis! Annapolis! oh! yes, Annapolis must be defended; to be sure Annapolis must be defended—where is Annapolis?" and when he was informed that Cape Breton was an island, he exclaimed, "Cape Breton an island! wonderful!—show it me in the map. So it is, sure enough! My dear sir, you always bring us good news. I must go and tell the King that Cape Breton is an island." And this was the man on whom Fielding had to wait! It is satisfactory to know that the Duke's calm judgment *highly approved* Fielding's plan.

When at length Fielding was at liberty to go to Bath he did not think it advisable to make that trip. But some change was necessary; death impended him in England; his friends and wife implored him to fly for it to another land. For their sakes he consented, and after some discussion determined on a voyage to Lisbon. He well knew his end was approaching, but the hopefulness of his temperament made him think it probable that he might for another year enjoy *the pleasures* of life; for with all his suffering, and notwithstanding his freedom from fear of death, he was not anxious to die, but on the contrary found greater happiness in existence than is experienced by most people blessed with health, and wealth, and liberty. When Lady Mary Wortley Montague, his cousin and early acquaintance, was certified that he was no more, she wrote, "I am sorry for Henry Fielding's death, not only as I shall read no more of his writings, but because I believe he lost more than

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others, as no man enjoyed life more than he did; though few had less occasion to do so—the highest of his preferment being raking in the lowest sinks of vice and misery. I should think it a nobler and less nauseous employment to be one of the staff-officers that conduct the nocturnal weddings. His happy constitution (even when he had, with great pains, half demolished it) made him forget every evil, when he was before a venison-pasty, or over a flask of champagne; and I am persuaded that he has known more happy moments than any prince upon earth. His natural spirits gave him rapture with his cook-maid, and cheerfulness when he was striving in a garret." (By his *cook-maid* her *lady-ship* means the second Mrs. Fielding.) In this unusually happy constitution, in all probability, lay the cause of Fielding's many imprudences; most men can only get an occasional glimpse of sunshine, an occasional taste of felicity—and that only by wise calculation and provision; but how could Fielding, with such a well of gladness in his breast, deem it necessary to husband his resources, his means for procuring creature comforts, and the grosser materials for bliss? Anyhow this gleefulness of heart sent him cheerily (*bravely* he would have gone—even had he been sad as sad could be) on his voyage to death.

He went on board the vessel which carried him to Lisbon, on June 26, 1754. In the journal he kept of his voyage, there is the following passage:—"On this day the most melancholy sun I had ever beheld arose, and found me awake in my house at Fordhook. By the light of this sun I was, in my own opinion, last to behold and take leave of some of those creatures on whom I doted with a mother-like fondness, guided by nature and passion, and uncured and unhardened by all the doctrine of that philosophical school where I had learned to bear pains and despise death.

"In this situation, as I could not conquer Nature, I submitted entirely to her, and she made as great a fool of me as

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she had ever done of any woman whatsoever; under the pretence of giving me leave to enjoy, she drew me in to suffer the company of my little ones during eight hours; and I doubt not whether, in that time, I did not undergo more than in all my distemper."

After much pain he managed to get on board the vessel at Rotherhithe. "I think," he writes, "upon my entrance of the boat, I presented a spectacle of the highest horror. The total loss of limbs was apparent to all who saw me, and my face contained marks of the most diseased state, if not of death itself. Indeed, so ghastly was my countenance that timorous women with child had abstained from my house, for fear of the ill consequences of looking at me. In this condition I ran the gauntlope (so I think I may call it) through rows of sailors and watermen, few of whom failed to pay their compliments to me by all manner of insults and jests on my misery." And then he goes on and states with his own simplicity that he did not conceive "any personal resentment at this behaviour; but it was a lively picture of that cruelty and inhumanity in the nature of men which I have often contemplated with concern, and which leads the mind into a train of very uncomfortable and melancholy thoughts."

Every one should read his narrative of his voyage to Lisbon. It contains no line that would be better removed; it is valuable from some sketches of character, in a more masterly style and finished with greater delicacy than any in his novels; and while it affords evidence that Fielding's intellect, instead of becoming weaker had grown more vigorous with the progress of his disease, it makes the reader intimately acquainted with the grandeur of his nature. Lying in severe bodily anguish, having for hours no companion to converse with (for sea-sickness fell severely on the three ladies—his wife, his eldest daughter, and their companion—who sailed with him), he derived amusement

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from all those troubles of his situation which affected only himself. His mind was active as ever; great schemes for the future at times rising before his imagination. The trifling incidents of that long and weary voyage, during which he had to undergo a painful surgical operation, he made the means of diverting his friends. Yet, one can scarcely believe that the humour displayed in that journal came from a dying man, not that it has the slightest tincture of unhallowed mirth—for it is all soft and playful as a child's smile, and is pervaded by that consideration for others which we are accustomed to think is almost solely possessed by women.

One night there was a terrible storm, and it was manifest by the captain's manner that the ship was in danger. "The frequency of these summons, as well as the solicitude with which they were made, sufficiently testified the state of the captain's mind; he endeavoured to conceal it, and would have given no small alarm to a *man who had not either learned what it is to die, or know what it is to be miserable.* And my dear wife and child must pardon me, if what I did not conceive to be any great evil for myself, I was not much terrified with the thoughts of happening to them; in truth, I have often thought they are both too good and too gentle to be trusted to the power of any man I know, to whom they could possibly be trusted.

"Can I say, then, I had no fear? Indeed I cannot. Reader, I was afraid for thee, lest thou should'st have been deprived of that pleasure thou art now enjoying; and that I should not live to draw out on paper that military character which thou didst peruse in the journal of yesterday." A true artist's anxiety! 'Tis thus he fears death and loves life! Lord, ere I die, let me do this work!

Much of the time during which he was alone he passed in looking out upon the vast ocean, and listening to the voices of its depths. There is in his journal the following

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passage, which has arrested every thoughtful reader: "Wednesday, July 3. This morning, I awaked at four o'clock, for my distemper seldom suffered me to sleep later. I presently got up, and had the pleasure of enjoying the sight of a tempestuous sea for four hours before the captain was stirring."

Henry Fielding died at Lisbon, October, 1754, in the 48th year of his age.

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CHAPTER VII.

SAMUEL RICHARDSON.

At the commencement of the last century, that is, rather more than a hundred and fifty years ago, there dwelt in a secluded village of Derbyshire, a joiner, who, by honest toil in his humble vocation, maintained a wife and a family of children in decent comfort. Of one of his progeny, a lad born into the world in the year 1689, the poor man was very proud; and, in the dreams of his paternal ambition, he designed him for the church. This boy, at thirteen years of age, was the wonder of his acquaintance. Such good use had he made of the meagre instruction bestowed upon him, that he was regarded amongst the poorer people of the parish as "the scholar," was employed to read aloud to assembled neighbours through winter evenings, and was made a recipient of their love confidences by three of the village beauties. What occupation in life these maidens carried on, history does not precisely declare; but we cannot be far wrong in conjecturing they were the sempstress of the rustic society, the squire's lady's lady's-maid, and the pretty niece of the widow lady who kept the Dragon. Of the young ladies this much is certain—they were, one and all, smitten with the darts of love, and had recourse to their little friend, Sammy Richardson, and got him not only to sympathise with them in their perplexities, but also to indite amatory epistles for them, and to give them directions how to entice and angle for their heroes, how to throw their flies of artifice, and play with them. Each damsel urged on the urchin the necessity of secresy, and so honourable was he in keeping sacred

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the trust reposed in him that no one of his fair friends ever suspected him of being tutor-in-the-affections to her companions. On one occasion a joyous girl—joyous for she was well steeped in love—begged the services of his pen. "What shall I write for you?" "Oh," said she, blushing, "how can I tell you? But you can't be too kind in what you say to him." And yet the foolish thing did not wish the letter to be very passionate, fearing that if "*he*" saw how she adored him he might not think so much of her!

A few years passed over Sammy's head, and then his worthy father, with much grief, found himself unable to give him the means of pushing his way into holy orders. So, instead of being reared for a Levite, it was determined in the family council that the boy should be bound 'prentice in London. Old Richardson himself had lived in the great metropolis, and rather adventurously for a joiner; having been so much concerned in the affairs of the unfortunate Duke of Monmouth, that he deemed it proper, when his Grace lost his head, to retire to Shrewsbury, "apprehensive, perhaps," suggests Scott, "of a fate similar to that of College, his brother-in-trade, well known in those times by the title of the Protestant joiner, who was executed for high treason in the reign of Charles II."

In the year 1706, Samuel came to London, and was bound to Mr. John Wilde, printer, of Stationers' Hall. For many years after this event, but little is known of his life, save that it is clear his course was such, that he might well have given a hint to Hogarth for his industrious apprentice. Mr. John Wilde was a sharp disciplinarian, but Sam rarely incurred his displeasure, and all the little leisure the young man had was devoted to mental culture. At the expiration of his apprenticeship, he remained in the service of his master, working as a compositor and corrector of the press to a printing office, for five or six years. By attention to business, obliging demeanour, and superior

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intelligence and literary prowess (for he had remarkable facility in the composition of "honest dedications") he gained the good-will of his employer, and was able to make good earnings, of which he was wise enough to lay up considerable savings. Rising by degrees, he took up his freedom, and commenced business on his own account in a court leading out of Fleet Street; from which spot on the increase of his connection, he moved to Salisbury Court (*i. e.* Square), to which locality his name is as inseparably connected, as Johnson's is with Gough Square.

On his circumstances promising fair, he took that step which all young men persist in taking directly they find themselves in a way to be warm—a wife; and he wedded Martha, a daughter of Mr. Allington Wilde, printer of Clerkenwell, thus uniting himself with his old master by a family tie. She died in 1731, after having presented to her husband, five sons and a daughter, all of whom died young.

Samuel Richardson continued to strive. A sagacious tradesman, he kept a keen look-out for business, and took it, not being over-nice what it was, so long as he was paid for it. When the libertine Duke Wharton made a stir in the city, and became a member of the Wax Chandlers' Company, Richardson, though opposed to his Grace's political opinions, printed "The True Briton," which appeared twice a week—taking good care though that his name should not appear. Informations were speedily lodged against Payne, the publisher, for Nos. 3, 4, 5 and 6, but the cautious Richardson pocketed his pay, and suffered no injury in reputation. It was purely a mercantile transaction.

His second wife was Elizabeth, a sister of Mr. Leake, bookseller, of Bath. By her he had a son and four daughters; of which second family the boy died young, and the four girls survived their father—Mary being married in 1757 to

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Mr. Ditcher, a surgeon, of Bath; Martha becoming, in 1762, the wife of Edward Brigden, Esq., F.R. and A.S.S.; Sarah being united in wedlock to Mr. Crowther, surgeon, of Boswell Court; and Anne remaining single.

Up to the year 1741, Richardson's career was merely one of successful industry in a respectable but not especially dignified calling. With a reputation for being civil and persevering in business, and for having amassed an easy competence, he lived in the regard of his fellow citizens as a sagacious and prosperous man; but not as one gifted with any extraordinary genius. But a change was at hand. The London bookseller, now fifty and more years of age, was persuaded by two brothers in trade to try his powers at the composition of some letters for the edification of servants and young women in the lower ranks of life. Richardson commenced the task, found pleasure in it, was pleased with the talent he discovered himself to possess, and finished by throwing aside (to be published at an after day) his first modest attempt for the good of housemaids, and by sending forth to the world his "Pamela," which appeared in 1741. A rage immediately seized the town for this famous work of fiction; and it was speedily as great a favourite in France and Germany as in its native country. Here is the title, "Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded. In a series of familiar letters from a beautiful young damsel to her parents. Now first published in order to cultivate the principles of Virtue and Religion in the minds of the youths of both sexes—a narrative that has its foundation in *Truth* and *Nature*; and at the same time that it agreeably entertains by a variety of various and affecting incidents is entirely divested of all those images which, in too many pieces calculated for amusement only, tend to inflame the minds they should instruct"!!! All classes and kinds of men combined in extolling the excellence of "Pamela," the beautiful young damsel, who positively had sufficient virtue to withstand the attempts of

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her master, who desired to ruin her, and sufficient delicacy to marry the filthy fellow directly he was fool enough to offer to be her husband. What an insight, more than pages and whole libraries of *histories* could give, does this fact afford us into the morality of the age! Divines of the most distinguished position recommended "Pamela" from the pulpit. Grave fathers placed it with tearful eyes in the hands of their sons. The ladies were in raptures. On the Mall, in the Park, at Ranelagh, they were in the habit of holding the volumes up to one another, to show that they were not behind-hand in the fashion. To do justice to the times, it must be stated that there were a few, though a very few, whose morality and delicacy were offended with the gross pictures the book contained. Dr. Watts, to whom the author sent the volumes, in the letter acknowledging the present said that the ladies of his acquaintance could not read them without blushing. And Fielding with his audacious ridicule of the absurdities of the work, in his "Joseph Andrews," sent all England, Richardson excepted, into a convulsive fit of laughter. Was ever satire more intensely comic? In the new book for the promotion of "the principles of Virtue and Religion in the minds of the Youth of both sexes," there was no wicked, fine gentleman trying to seduce or force the chastity of an innocent serving girl; but a naughty rich lady laying her snares for a handsome young footman. Richardson never forgave the cruel blow; he retained his friendship for, and intimacy with Miss Sarah and Miss Patty Fielding; but never ceased to rail at and back-bite their noble brother.

The curiosity of the ladies as to whether there "really was any foundation in fact for Pamela's history," was (will it be believed of the ladies?) very great. "The author," Mrs. Barbauld tells us, "received anonymous letters from six ladies, who pressed him to declare upon his honour—which, they were sure, he was too much of a gentleman to

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violate—whether the story was true or false; and they hoped Mrs. B.—if there was such a lady—would not be against satisfying a request which redounded so much to her honour. They tell him, also, that they have taken an oath to keep the secret, if he will entrust them with it; and that they will never cease writing till he has obliged them. He tells them, in his answer, it was never known, since the world began, that a secret was kept which had been entrusted to "six ladies." So much for "Pamela," which altered the pronunciation of the name from Pope's,

"The gods to curse Pamela with her prayers."

In 1842, appeared two more volumes under Pamela's protection, being "A Series of Letters from a beautiful Young Damsel to her Parents; and afterwards, in her exalted condition, between her and persons of figure and quality, upon the most important and entertaining subjects in genteel life." But these, comparatively, were failures.

The triumphs of authorship did not make Richardson inattentive to his shop. A prudent man, past the middle age of life, he was not likely to neglect that which supplied him with the means to keep up a comfortable town-house in Salisbury Court, and another residence in the country (first at North-End, Hammersmith, and afterwards at Parson's Green). Amongst other important business transacted in his office was the printing of the journals of the House of Commons, 26 vols., folio, which employment came to him through the interest of the Speaker, Mr. Onslow. In 1754, he was elected to the respectable and lucrative office of Master of the Stationers' Company; and in 1760 he bought a moiety of the patent of law printer to his Majesty, his partner being Miss Catherine Lintot, afterwards wife of Henry Fletcher, Esq., M.P. for Lancashire.

After the second batch of "Pamela," Richardson published (as author) nothing of importance till his "Clarissa

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Harlowe" appeared in 1749, which created almost as much excitement as "Tom Jones," which came out at nearly the same time. During the few months that intervened between the sending forth the first four and last four volumes, the public grew frantic with curiosity. How was it to end? Were they to marry? Was Clarissa to live happily for the rest of her days? Was that dear, wicked thing, Lovelace, to be reformed? The ladies (God bless them—are they not always merciful?) wrote passionate entreaties to the author to act the part of a man and a Christian. Lady Bradshaigh, under the name of Belfour, implored him to *be merciful*, and not to award eternal misery to those whom he had created. "Pray, sir, make her happy; you can so easily do it! *Pray reform him! Will you not save a soul, sir?*"

Richardson was so pleased with Mrs. Belfour's epistle, that he answered it. She immediately favoured him with another billet, and a romantic correspondence ensued between him and his incognita. They arranged to meet in the park, and didn't; they fell out, and fell in with each other; they were playful till they grew angry, and then made it up again. Interesting creatures! He was a little pompous, podgy old man of sixty years; and she—well, she was not too old to make a fool of herself—upwards of fifty! The fascinating Belfour wished to know how she might distinguish him in the park. He thus described himself—"Short, rather plump; about five feet five inches; fair wig; one hand generally in his bosom, the other a cane in it, which he leans upon under the skirts of his coat, that it may imperceptibly serve him as a support when attacked by sudden tremors and dizziness; of a light brown complexion; teeth not yet failing him." What a Lovelace! How did Belfour enchain him? As woman ever has made and ever shall make a fool of man, by flattering him even to contentment. "As to 'Tom Jones,'" she wrote, "I am fatigued with the name, having lately fallen into the company

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of several young ladies who had each a 'Tom Jones' in some part of the world, for so they call their favourites; and ladies, you know, are for ever talking of their favourites. Last post, I received a letter from a lady who laments the loss of her Tom Jones: and from another who was happy in the company of her Tom Jones. In like manner, the gentlemen have their Sophias. A few days ago, in a circle of gentlemen and ladies, who had their Tom Jones's and Sophias, a friend of mine told me he must show me his Sophia, the sweetest creature in the world, and immediately produced a Dutch mastiff puppy."

To this Richardson replied, "* * * So long as the world will receive, Mr. Fielding will write. Have you ever seen a list of his performances? Nothing but a shorter life than I wish him can hinder him from writing himself out of date. The 'Pamela,' which he abused in his 'Shamela,' taught him how to write to please, though his names are so different. Before his 'Joseph Andrews,' (hints and names taken from that story, with a lewd and ungenerous engraftment) the poor man wrote without being read, except his 'Pasquins,' &c., aroused party attention." And these mean, malevolent observations were made on his rival, in a letter to a woman whose very name he was ignorant of! But his jealousy displayed itself even yet more offensively than in this instance. To his French translator he wrote, "'Tom Jones' is a dissolute book. Its run is over, even with us. Is it true that France had virtue enough to refuse to license such a profligate performance?" And again, "I have not been able to read any more than the first volume of 'Amelia.' Poor Fielding. *I could not help telling his sister* that I was equally surprised and concerned for his continued lowness. Had your brother, said I, been born in a stable, or been a runner in a sponging house, we should have thought him a genius, and wished he had had the advantages of a liberal educa-

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tion, and of being admitted into good company; but it is beyond my conception that a man of family, and who had some learning, and who really is a writer, should descend so excessively low in all his pieces. Who can care for any of his people?"

"*I could not help saying to his sister.*" When Fielding paid off old scores with his enemies, he did not do so by disturbing the content, and happiness, and natural pride of their sisters by malicious insinuations.

Yet Richardson was far from being a man of an ignoble disposition. His well-stocked purse was the liberal distributor of assistance to the afflicted; he was one of the first promoters, if not the originator, of the Magdalen Hospital; when Letitia Pilkington, once the friend of Swift, and the wife of a clergyman, sank into the lowest degradation of vice and beggary, he supplied her with money and, yet more, with kind words; and he would take a poor girl from the streets, anxious to amend her ways, into his house till she was able to get a situation. The poor men of letters, when they got into difficulties, had recourse to him, and were certain of an attentive and kind hearer of their stories. "I remember writing to him," said Johnson, "from a sponging house; and was so sure of my deliverance, through his kindness and liberality, that, before his reply was brought, I knew I could afford to joke with the rascal who had me in custody, and did so, over a pint of adulterated wine, for which, at that instant, I had no money to pay." In his own family, too, he was a respectable and well-meaning, though perhaps disagreeable fellow. The domestic, and especially the nursery arrangements, were just what those of a model and devout citizen of old London town ought to be; but his demeanour was pompous, and he exacted homage from all within his gates. His children, according to the manner of the day, were continually called upon to *honour* and *obey* him; they were very *dutiful* and

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respectful children, but it would seem they did not love him; in his presence they lost their tongues, and they never approached him without trembling. "My girls are shy little fools," he used to say. Lady Bradshaigh told him that his daughters' letters, with the "honoured sir," and "ever dutiful," were cold and formal. He replied, "I had rather (as too much reverence is not the vice of this age) lay down rules that should stiffen into apparent duty, than make the pert rogues too familiar with characters so reverend." When a father desires reverence rather than love from a child, he usually gets neither. Richardson added also, "I could wish from the respectful manner (avoiding formality and stiffness as much as possible), in letters to a parent, let my eye fall on what part of the letter it would, to be able to distinguish it from one directed to a playmate."

Not a very good understanding seems to have existed between him and his wife. In his letters he almost invariably speaks of her with cold commendation very different from the warm eulogy he bestows on his fair correspondents. Of the society of ladies he was very fond. They understood his works; they saw their beauties so much more readily than men could; and, as gratitude is one of their dominant virtues, and a proneness to express it one of their amiable weaknesses, they of course were frequently thanking the bestower of their enjoyments. One, two, three, or more ladies were always staying in his house, admiring his genius. "The author of 'Clarissa,'" says Mrs. Barbauld, "was always fond of female society. He lived in a kind of flower-garden of ladies; they were his inspirers, his critics, his applauders; connections of business apart, they were his chief correspondents. He had generally a number of young ladies at his house, whom he used to engage in conversation on some subject of sentiment, and provoke, by artful opposition, to display the treasures of intellect they possessed." These

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selected women were honoured with the appellation of "his daughters," and very complimentary letters they were in the habit of sending him. Miss Sarah Fielding smiles on him in this fashion, "* * * * never did I so much wish for it as in this daring attempt of mentioning 'Clarissa'; but when I read of her, I am all sensation; my heart glows; I am overwhelmed; my only vent is tears; and unless tears could mark my thoughts as legibly as ink, I cannot speak half I feel." Poor Letitia Pilkington burst forth, "What can I pay thee for this noble usage but grateful praise? So heaven itself is paid; and you, truly made in the image of God, will, I hope, accept of the low, but sincere oblation of a thankful spirit." It was an evil day for Richardson's reputation when his correspondence was issued to the world. What hero, even though his valet would speak a good word for him, could stand the publication of whatever nonsense he has written to ladies? Where do men so egregiously commit themselves as in epistolary correspondences with intellectual women? And Richardson was the vainest of vain men. The little fellow swelled with pride, and blushed to his ears when he was told a lady of rank, or a royal duke had called him an amusing fellow. A writer in the *Edinburgh Review* says these letters show how exactly in the same style are the letters of "Misses" of that day and this. But this sneer is unfair. The women with whom Richardson passed his life instead of being common-place "Misses," were the superior women of their generation. Amongst them were Mrs. Chapone, Miss Collier, Mrs. Carter, and Miss Sarah Fielding. It is true that Miss Fielding's novels are forgotten, and they contain little of instruction for the present age; but it must be remembered that she was almost alone amongst women in being able to write them, and they were much admired by those who first read them. Again, the Boswellism of these ladies deserves commendation; for it was not then the fashion, as it is now,

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for girls fresh taken from the nursery to the drawing-room to offend the judgment and taste of "literary men in society" with flimsy adulation; but, on the contrary, women then ran the risk of being well laughed at by their brothers and sisters, if they declared themselves ambitious of the friendship of a man of genius. In those days it was ill-breeding for ladies *to have* a respectable stock of scholastic information; it was utter abandonment *to display* it. Lady Bradshaigh, for a long time, had not courage to confess to her friends that she was corresponding with the celebrated Richardson. And when he sent her his portrait, she said it was the likeness of her valued acquaintance, Mr. Dickenson. And Mrs. Delany objected to the words *intellects* and *ethics*, in one of the conversation-pieces in "Grandison," as too scholastic to proceed from the mouth of a female.

Of Richardson's vanity Boswell tells us a good story. "A literary lady has favoured me with a characteristic anecdote of Richardson. One day at his country-house at Northend, where a large company was assembled at dinner, a gentleman, who was just returned from Paris, wishing to please Richardson, mentioned to him a flattering circumstance, that he had seen his "Clarissa" lying on the King's brother's table. Richardson, observing that part of the company were engaged in talking to each other, affected then not to attend to it: but, by and bye, when there was a general silence, and he thought that the flattery might be fully heard, he addressed himself to the gentleman; "I think, sir, you were saying somewhat about"—pausing in a high flutter of expectation. The gentleman, provoked at his inordinate vanity, resolved not to indulge it, and with an exquisitely sly air of indifference, answered, "A mere trifle, sir, not worth repeating!" The mortification of Richardson was visible, and he did not speak ten words more the whole day. *Dr. Johnson was present and appeared to enjoy it much.*" Dr. Johnson always did enjoy seeing people made

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uncomfortable through *their feelings*: if men were such fools as to have *feelings*, they ought to smart for it! And of Richardson, as a man, the Doctor rarely spoke kindly, though he admired him as an author. Boswell says of one conversation,—"I only remember that he (the Doctor) expressed a high value for his talents and virtue. But that his perpetual study was to ward off petty inconveniences, and to procure petty pleasures; and his love of continual superiority was such that he took care always to be surrounded by women, who listened to him implicitly and did not venture to contradict his opinions: and that his desire of distinction was so great that he used to give large vails to Speaker Onslow's servants that they might treat him with respect." Johnson spoke with acrimony of Richardson's surrounding himself with women, and well he might; for the Doctor himself was fond of the idolatry of the softer sex, and some of the members of his intellectual harem had gone over to Richardson's tea-pot sentimentality. Amongst the original anecdotes of Dr. Johnson, communicated to Mr. Croker, is one from Miss Reynolds, who says—"The first time I was in company with Dr. Johnson, which was at Miss Cotterel's, I well remember the flattering notice he took of a lady present, on her saying that she was inclined to estimate the morality of every person according as they liked or disliked 'Clarissa Harlowe.' He was a great admirer of Richardson's works in general; but of 'Clarissa' he always spoke with the most enthusiastic praise. He used to say that it was the first book in the world for the knowledge it displays of the human heart. Yet of the author I never heard him speak with any degree of cordiality, but rather as if impressed with some cause of resentment against him; and this has been imputed to something of jealousy, not to say envy, on account of Richardson's having engrossed the attentions and affectionate assiduities of several very ingenious literary ladies, whom he used to

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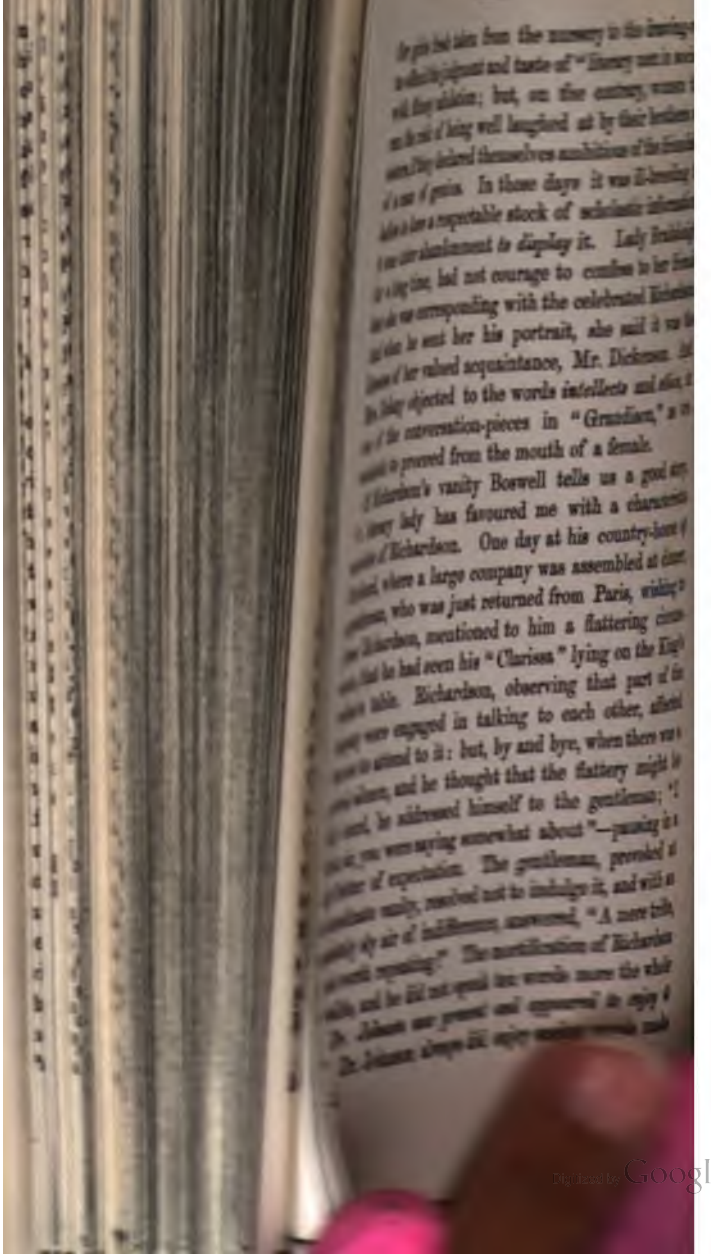

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call his adopted daughters, and for whom Dr. Johnson had conceived a paternal affection (particularly) for two of them, Miss Carter and Miss Mulso (now Mrs. Chapone), previous to their acquaintance with Richardson; and it was said that he thought himself neglected by them on his account." It was only natural for the poor doctor to feel resentment, and to take all occasions of putting his triumphant adversary in a ridiculous light, to lead him on to talk magniloquently, or, in the Doctor's language, *to make him roar!* And little ingenuity was requisite for malice to convert Richardson into a butt. Bred amongst common people, he never acquired the manners of good society; nor was he generally admitted into those polite circles, an *entrée* into which distinguished writers can generally obtain. Lady M. W. Montague informs us "the doors of the great were never opened to him;" and that meant much more in her ladyship's time than in our own. He was painfully oppressed with a sense of himself; always uneasy when unobserved, and miserable, save when fed with praise. He retained, also, many of the most ungenerous prejudices of the working classes, from which he rose. The nobly born he could not address with composure; and he was morbidly afraid of acting subserviently when he was required to pay deference to rank. Lady Echlin wished him to become acquainted with her daughter, a lady of fashion. "The advances must come from her. She is the superior in rank, and often ladies of the west-end of the town do not wish to pass Temple Bar," was the ill-bred answer. There is, moreover, good evidence that he was ashamed of his humble origin, for he kept as a profound secret the township in which he was born and reared; and he always avoided discussion of the particulars of his family history. The following is the account he was pleased to give of himself. "My father was a very honest man, descended of a family of middling note in the county of Surrey; but

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which, having for several generations a large number of children, the not large possessions were split and divided, so that he and his brothers were put to trades, and the sisters married to tradesmen. My mother was also a good woman, of a family not ungenteel; but whose father and mother died in her infancy, within half-an-hour of each other, in the London pestilence of 1665.

"My father's business was that of a joiner, then more distinct from that of a carpenter than now it is with us. He was a good draughtsman, and understood architecture. His skill and ingenuity, and an understanding superior to his business, with his remarkable integrity of heart and manner, made him personally beloved by several persons of rank, among whom were the Duke of Monmouth and the first Earl of Shaftesbury, both so noted in our English history, &c." What a specimen of weak dishonesty is this stuff about *a family of middling note* which, having a great number of children for *several generations* (six generations and he was in the 15th century), had their *not large possessions* split up, and the lady of a *not ungenteel family!* When a man puts in a false claim for descent he ought to lie right royally about the matter.

Yet to Richardson's credit, be it said, he did not neglect his poor relations. The orphan children of an unfortunate brother he befriended with paternal care; and in a thousand pleasing ways, an unostentatious benevolence ornamented his life. He was a considerate master in the full sense of the word. To encourage early rising amongst his workmen he used to hide half-crowns among the type, so that the one earliest at work might discover them and have them as rewards; and in like manner he frequently brought fruit up from his country-seat and distributed it to those servants who merited expressions of his favour. All children, except his own, were very fond of him. "My first recollection of him," writes a lady to Mrs. Barbauld, "is in the

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centre of Salisbury Square, or Salisbury Court, as it was then called; and of being admitted, as a playful child, into his study, where I have often seen Dr. Young and others—and where I was generally caressed, and rewarded with biscuits and bonbons of some kind or other, and sometimes with books, for which he, and some more of my friends, kindly encouraged a taste, even at that early age, which has adhered to me all my life long, and continues to be the solace of many a painful hour. I recollect that he used to drop in at my father's, for we lived nearly opposite, late in the evening to supper; when he would say, he had worked so long as his nerves and eyes would let him, and was come to relax with a little friendly and domestic chat. I even then used to creep to his knee, and hang upon his words, for my whole family doated on him; and once, I recollect, that at one of these visits, probably about the year 1753, I was standing by his knee, when my mother's maid came to summon me to bed; upon which, being unwilling to part from him, and manifesting some reluctance, he begged I might be permitted to stay a little longer; and, on my mother's objecting that the servant would be wanted to wait at supper, for in those days of friendly intercourse and real hospitality, a decent maid-servant was the only attendant at *his own* and many creditable tables, where, nevertheless, much company was received, Mr. Richardson said 'I am sure Miss P— is now so much a woman, that she does not want any one to attend her to bed, but will conduct herself with so much propriety, and put out her candle so carefully, that she may henceforward be indulged with remaining with us till supper is served.'"

The last years of Richardson's life were spent in bodily affliction. For many years he was compelled to discontinue attendance at public worship, because he could not bear a crowd; and he was ever under medical treatment. His malady, a nervous one, increased so upon him, that for long

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before his death he could not lift the quantity of a small glass of wine to his mouth, though put into a tumbler, without assistance. Mrs. Chapone, in her "Ode to Health," wrote—

> "Hast thou not left a Richardson unblest!
> He woos thee still in vain relentless maid,
> Though skilled in sweetest accents to persuade,
> And wake soft pity in the savage breast;
> Him virtue loves, and brightest fame is his;
> Smile, thou, too, Goddess, and complete his bliss."

The poor man, in obedience to Bishop Berkely, took tar water, but it did him no more good than it did to poor Harry Fielding. For seven years he tried a vegetable diet, took regular exercise on a chamber horse, and frequented Tunbridge in the season; but all to no good. On July 4, 1761 (about eight years after the publication of his last great work, "Sir Charles Grandison," and the year after he purchased the property of the patent of law printer), he was struck with apoplexy at his country house, and died at the full age of 72. He was buried near his first wife in the middle aisle of St. Bride's church, Fleet-street.

On his death the language of lament for his loss, and of admiration of his genius, went up from every land of Europe; and nowhere was the mourning more passionate than in France. Diderot in his elegy on Richardson, exclaimed, *"Ah Richardson! thou singular genius in my eyes! thou shalt form my reading in all times. If forced by sharp necessity, my friend falls into indigence; if the mediocrity of my fortune is not sufficient to bestow on my children the necessary cares for their education, I will sell my books, but thou shalt remain; yes, thou shalt rest in the same class with Moses, Homer, Euripides, and Sophocles, to be read alternately.

"Oh, Richardson, I dare pronounce that the most veri-

* This passage is of Mr. Disraeli's translation.

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table history is full of fictions, and thy fictions are full of truths. History paints some individuals; thou paintest the human species. History attributes to some individuals what they have neither said nor done; all that thou attributest to man he has said and done. History embraces but a point of duration, a point on the surface of the globe; thou hast embraced all places and all times. The human heart, which has been and ever shall be the same, is the model which thou copiest. If we were severely to criticise the best historian, would he maintain his ground as thou? In this point of view, I can venture to say, that frequently history is a miserable romance; and romance, as thou hast composed it, is a good history. Painter of nature thou never liest!

"I have never yet met with a person who shared my enthusiasm that I was not tempted to embrace, and to press him in my arms!

"Richardson is no more. His loss touches me as if my brother was no more. I bore him in my heart without having seen him, and knowing him but by his works. He has not had all the reputation he merited. Richardson! if living thy merit has been disputed, how great wilt thou appear to our children's children, when they shall see thee at the distance we now see Homer! Then who will dare to steal a line from thy sublime works? Thou hast more admirers amongst us than in thine own country—and at this I rejoice."

The French, unquestionably, were his especial applauders. Rousseau was scarcely less vehement in his admiration than Diderot. Horace Walpole, who thought the author of "Clarissa" very "stupid," was much irritated at finding all the *salons* of Paris subject to the Richardson mania, which turned to ridicule D'Alembert's contemptuous observation on the novelist, "La nature est bonne à imiter, mais non jusqu'a l'ennui." Mrs. Barbauld says "she well remembered a Frenchman who paid a visit to Hampstead for

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the sole purpose of finding out the house in the *flask-walk* where Clarissa lodged, and was surprised at the ignorance and indifference of the inhabitants on that subject. The *flask-walk* was to him as much classic ground as the rocks of Meillerie to the admirers of Rousseau; and, probably, if an English traveller were to make similar inquiries in Switzerland, he would find that the very rocks of Meillerie, and the *chalets* of the Valais, suggest no ideas to the inhabitants but such as are connected with their dairies and farms."

To us the enthusiastic homage rendered to Richardson, if we do not use all historical aids whereby to move ourselves backward into his times, is altogether incomprehensible. Such a book as Pamela, no respectable milliner would now peruse, and Pamela with all its *prestige* no lady now likes to confess having read. And yet it was so delicate! its heroine so chaste and pure! She could not reflect that she was made with legs without blushing!—*Vide* letter No. VII. to her parents:—

"Dear Father—Since my last, my master gave me more fine things. He called me up to my lady's closet, and pulling out her drawers, he gave me two suits of fine Flanders lac'd headcloths, three pair of fine silk shoes, two hardly the worse, and just fit for me; for my old lady had a very little foot; and several ribbands and topknots of all colours, and four pairs of fine white cotton stockens, and three pairs of rich stays, and a pair of rich silver buckles in one pair of shoes. I was quite astonished, and unable to speak for a while; *but yet I was inwardly ashamed to take the stockens, for Mrs. Jervis was not there;* If she had, it would have been nothing. I believe I received them very awkwardly for he smiled at my awkwardness, and said, 'Don't blush, Pamela; Dost thou think I don't know pretty maids wear shoes and stockens? * * *'"—

To this the father and mother responded in Letter No. VIII.

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"Dear Pamela—I cannot but renew my cautions to you on your master's kindness to you, and his free expressions to you about stockens. Yet there may not be, and I hope there is not anything in it."

When Pamela was imprisoned at B—n Hall, Mrs. Jewkes the housekeeper acting as turnkey, she thus tuned her harp to the Hundred and seventh Psalm.

"When sad I sat in B——n-hall
All watched round about,
And thought of every absent friend,
The tears of grief burst out.

My joys and hopes r'll overthrown,
My heart-strings almost broke,
Unfit my mind for melody,
Much more to hear a joke.

Then she to whom I prisoner was,
Said to me tauntingly,
'Now cheer your heart, and sing a song,
And turn your mind to joy.'

'Alas!' said I, 'how can I frame
My heavy heart to sing;
Or tune my mind, while thus inthrall'd
By such a wicked thing!

But yet, if from my innocence
I, even in thought, should slide,
Then let my fingers quite forget
The sweet spinet to guide.

And let my tongue within my mouth
Be locked for ever fast,
If I rejoice, before I see
My full deliverance past.

And thou, Almighty, recompense
The evils I endure,
From those who seek my sad disgrace,
So causeless to procure.

Remember, Lord, that Mrs. Jewkes,
When with a mighty sound,
She cries, Down with her chastity,
Down to the very ground!

Even so shalt thou, O wicked one,
At length to shame be brought;
And happy shall all those be called
That my deliverance wrought.

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Yea, blessed shall the man be called
That shames thee of thy evil,
And saves me from thy vile attempts,
And thee, too, from the devil.'"

How could Byron dare to rival this in the Hebrew melodies? If we might be allowed to point to one passage as excelling the others, we should select for grandeur and sublimity the pathetic imprecation of the Divine anger on Mrs. Jewkes.

Richardson was too wise a man not to profit by the censures made on his first work, though perhaps he was unduly elated by the praise it elicited. He saw what a mistake he made in allowing his heroine (pattern of feminine delicacy that she was!) to marry the man who had made a brutal attempt on her virtue. In his "Clarissa" he had made the same position of an attractive man plotting the destruction of a beautiful girl, and then on the failure of his schemes endeavouring to get her hand in marriage. But Clarissa was firm in her rejection of her unworthy lover, and retired from her perplexities —by dying, to the deep mortification of all readers of her story.—The author, however, fell into another grave error as a moralist. The picture of parental tyranny in old Harlowe, and brutality in James and Arabella Harlowe to their sister, is nothing short of disgusting, and could but arouse in the breasts of children feelings of disaffection to the authority of their natural guardians. How Johnson got over these features of the history, may well surprise us. But he did. Richardson, in his eye was an author above blame; the Doctor used to say of Richardson and Fielding, "that there was as great a difference between them, as between a man who knows how a watch is made, and a man who could tell the hour by looking at the dial-plate," and he was fond of repeating, to Fielding's disparagement, Richardson's favourite observation, "that the virtues of Fielding's heroes were the vices of a truly good man." On one occasion the following conversation took place on Fielding being mentioned.

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Johnson.—"He is a blockhead."

(Boswell expresses astonishment.)

Johnson.—"What I mean by his being a blockhead is, that he was a barren rascal."

Boswell.—"Will you not allow, sir, that he draws very natural pictures of human life?"

Johnson.—"Why, sir, it is of very low life. Richardson used to say, that had he not known who Fielding was, he should have believed he was an ostler. Sir, there is more knowledge of the heart in one letter of Richardson's, than in all 'Tom Jones's.' I indeed never read 'Joseph Andrews.'"

Erskine.—"Surely, sir, Richardson is very tedious."

Johnson.—"Why, sir, if you were to read Richardson for the story, your impatience would be so much fretted that you would hang yourself. But you must read him for the sentiment, and consider the story as only giving occasion to the sentiment."

If the suffrages of Richardson's readers were at this time taken on his novels, "Sir Charles Grandison" would be triumphantly elected as the favourite; for it has a good story, is populous with dramatic scenes, has a happy termination (a great thing for the popularity of a fiction!) and contains an inexhaustible mine of that best part of human nature—*woman-nature*. The female characters of "Sir Charles Grandison" have contributed wealth to half the good novels that have been composed since their coming into the world. Miss Byron is the least admirable of them, perhaps for the reason that she is determined we shall think her the best. Far short of our standard of delicacy and *feminine* excellence does she fall, prating, as she everlastingly is, of her own perfections! Here is language for a young lady of twenty, who has never been in love, to her intimate young lady-friend! "Three of his women we have heard of. *And whose leavings is it, my dear, that a virtuous woman takes who marries a profligate?*" Sir Charles the immaculate is

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also too good for a perfect man. Put him back into the dark ages, and place *St.* before his name, and he will do; but to meet with his like in this world of weakness, at dinner parties and balls, would soon make the most fortunate lot insufferable. He is respectability incarnate! As a critic, his contemporary, said, "He is too fond of hearing himself talk." Perdition with Sir Hargrave Pollexfen would be preferable to ten thousand a year at the price of spending ten minutes daily in Sir Charles's society. An aggravating prig! Miss Byron to Lady G—— "We were told, there would be a crowded church this morning, in expectation of seeing the new humble servant of Miss Byron attending her thither; for it is everywhere known that Sir Charles Grandison is come down to make his addresses to the young creature who is happy in every one's love and good wishes; and all is now said to have been settled between him and us, by his noble sister, and Lord G——, and Dr. Bartlett, when they were with us. You see what credit you did us by your kind visit, my dear. And we are to be married. O! my dear Lady G——, you cannot imagine how soon!

"Many of the neighbourhood seemed disappointed when they saw me led in by my uncle, and Mr. Deane leading my aunt, and Nancy and Lucy only attended by their brother. But it was not long before Mr. Greville, Mr. Fenwick, and Sir Charles entered, and went into the pew of the former, which is over against ours. Mr. Greville and Mr. Fenwick bowed low to us, severally, the moment they went into the pew.

"*Sir Charles had other devoirs to pay.* To false shame, you have said, he was always superior. I was delighted to see the example he set. *He paid us his second compliments with a grace peculiar to himself.* I felt my face glow on the whispering that went round. I thought I read in every eye admiration of him, even through the sticks of some of the ladies' fans.

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"What a difference was there between the two men and him in their behaviour, throughout both the service and the sermon! Yet, whoever beheld two of the three so decent, so attentive, so reverent, I may say, before? 'Were all who call themselves gentlemen (thought I, more than once) like this, the world would yet be a good world.'

"Mr. Greville had his arm in a sling. He seemed highly delighted with his guest; so did Mr. Fenwick. When the sermon was ended, Mr. Greville held the pew-door ready opened, to attend our movements; and when we were in motion to go, he taking officiously Sir Charles's hand, bent towards us. Sir Charles met us with that easy grace peculiar to himself, and offered with a profound respect his hand to me!"

A writer in the *Edinburgh Review* has observed, "The mansion of the Harlowes, which, before the appearance of Lovelace, is represented as the abode of domestic felicity, is a place in which daylight can scarcely be supposed to shine; and Clarissa, with her scrupulous devotions, her intolerably early rising, her day divided into tasks, and her quantities of needlework and discretion, has something in her much less winning and attractive than inferior artists have often communicated to an innocent beauty of seventeen. The solemnity and moral discourses of Sir Charles, his vows, his minuets, compliments, and immovable tranquillity, are much more like to excite the derision than the admiration of a modern reader."

The last important step of Richardson in literature, was to publish "A Collection of the Moral and Instructive Sentiments, Maxims, Cautions, and Reflexions contained in the Histories of Pamela, Clarissa, and Sir Charles Grandison, Digested under proper heads, with reference to the volume, and page, both in octavo and twelves, in their respective histories." If Dickens or Bulwer were to do the like, what work they would have! The volume in question is an

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octavo, closely printed, and containing 394 pages, inclusive of index and letters. Richardson hoped it would be generally used as a dictionary of morality, and the human race would be revived by the perusal of such precious truths as the following:—

"A young woman, of whatever degree, who keeps men at a modest distance, will be sure to be the more valued for it, even by those who had formed designs upon her honour.

"Beauty without goodness is but a skin-deep perfection.

"Flattery and pretended admiration are the engines by which men make their first approaches to the hearts of women.

"It cannot be a weakness to be touched at great and concerning events in which our humanity is concerned.

"It is an act of tyranny to insist on obedience to an unreasonable demand.

"The blustering, craving lover cannot deserve encouragement.

"Love—prostituted name!—is often made a cover for all acts of violence, indiscretion, folly.

"'The *parturient circumstances* are humbling and awful ones,' says Lady G., 'and yet, with such prospects, do some girls leap rivers, climb walls, &c.'

"Chastity is the crown and glory of a woman."

Why was this chastity so loudly insisted on? How was it that the gross terms in which Richardson preached it did not shock his readers? In rightly answering these questions, we should show the causes of his popularity and great usefulness—how he became famous all over the educated world, even so much so that he received a pressing invitation from the Moravians to go to Germany—so high an opinion had they formed of the moral tendency of his writings. Richardson was truly a teacher of his age—not a year beyond it, but in it, and of it, and understanding it. Good taste was not offended at his coarseness, because in our

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sense of the term, good taste can scarcely be said then to have existed. The women saw nothing repugnant in his descriptions of their dispositions—their want of the highest sentiment, and their proneness to sensual pleasures—because his words were true. The pictures a teetotal lecturer draws at a temperance meeting of the repulsive accompaniments of intoxication, do not nauseate his audience because they are either drunkards or habituated to the unsightliness of inebriety. So in Pamela triumphant, there was nothing displeasing to our forefathers, because society was full of Pamelas fallen.

It is the custom to speak of the license of the era of the Restoration as a reaction from the Puritan tyranny. This is an easy way of pushing back the point of inquiry, but nothing more. What caused the Puritan enthusiasm, which was as morbid in the direction of health as the dissoluteness of Charles's court was in the direction of brute degradation? There is a point of uncleanness at which nature revolts, and the filthy wallower makes for the running streams. But in unconstrained godliness there is nothing to frighten the brave or the timid into fanaticism. Puritanism, far from being the cause, was an effect of dissoluteness; and the immorality that caused it was one of the necessary evils that sprung from that revolution which we still call the Reformation; but, misled by pedants and the wilfulness of our nature, are fast contracting a habit of speaking of with great disrespect. Shakspeare was the great expression of chivalric homage to woman, and he spoke of her rare loveliness as if he felt it the most fitting oration he could make over the age of Chivalry, then falling into its dark grave. In *his* world, man is under the ennobling rule of woman; his very jealousy speaks her dignity and incomparable beauty. The furious Othello cannot hate, but *pities*.

Othello.—Hang her! I do but say what she is: so delicate with her

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needle! An admirable musician! O, she will sing the savageness out of a bear! Of so high and plenteous wit and invention!

Iago.—She's the worse for all this.

Othello.—O, a thousand times, a thousand times! And then of so gentle a condition!

Iago.—Ay, too gentle.

Othello.—Nay, that's certain; *but yet the pity of it, Iago! O, Iago, the pity of it, Iago.*

And Desdemona cannot even utter an unchaste word.

Emilia.—Alas, Iago, my lord hath so bewhored her,
Thrown such despite and heavy terms upon her,
As true hearts cannot bear.

Desdemona.—*Am I that name, Iago?*

Iago.—What name, fair lady?

Desdemona.—*Such as she says my lord did say I was.*

And so, in "Measure for Measure," Isabella says:—

"There is a vice that I do most abhor."

Rather than she will be stained by it, her brother must die. The weak Claudio pleads,

"Death is a fearful thing."

But she answers:—

"*And shamed life a hateful.*"

Shakspeare's wicked women extort our admiration. Lady Macbeth is coupled with a man as bad in purpose as herself; but feeble, wavering, and inconstant. He 'would not play false and yet would wrongly win.' She rouses him with her fierce scorn. It is so till nature fails;—sleep betrays her weakness; her bodily strength wastes away, and then comes that wild cry of her women—

Macbeth—Wherefore was that cry?
Seyton—The Queen, my Lord, is dead.

Such was woman in the homes of old England! Such were the women at whose hands Shakspeare received the kindly attentions that constitute our highest social

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enjoyment! Then came new thought, to remove and change,—and with it, ignorance and blind violence to destroy. The old religion was beaten down; that which was shortly before held to be most sacred philosophy was declared error and the vain delusion or base dishonesty of our nature. "If one dogma is false, why not another?" cried the libertine. Holy things were desecrated. When man begins to lose faith in God, then commences his infidelity to woman. An era black beyond parallel succeeded. A few there were who swore to be pure amid the world of depravity, and they stood out, sometimes grotesquely clad in ignorance, but always courageous and nerved with virtue,—and fought even to victory. How the foul, unnatural crime of that era has tainted our literature! From the age of Shakspeare down to Fielding, how few writers are there, out of the ranks of Puritanism, we should mourn for if their works were all destroyed! How did "the gentle cavalier" in the hour of his triumph display his dignity of sentiment? By degrading woman into a mere instrument for sensual enjoyment, and then hurling cruel scorn at her abasement. It required generations to efface the stain. And when again it became the fashion for men to think of, and address the mothers, and sisters, and daughters of their friends with decency, with what insolent deference did they treat them! "Goddess" and "Venus" were the words on the lips of fine gentlemen who prided themselves on their scholarship and taste, when lisping honeyed insults to their Chloes and Belindas; but their hearts were incapable of a generous passion for them. Feminine artlessness they only knew of as something for them to undo; virtue as a field for them to enter upon to destroy. From the revolting obscurity of Rochester, we come to the cold contempt of Pope, the savage disgust of Swift, and the amused tenderness of Addison. Cadenus

> "Sighed and languished, vow'd and writ,
> For pastime, *or to show his wit.*"

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And in showing his wit, the venerable man killed two of the few women worthy an earnest man's love that England then possessed.

In "Sir Fopling Flutter," Dorimant asks "Has she wit?" Medley answers "*More than is usual in her sex, and as much malice.*" Congreve found out what a woman was good for. Tattle—"Ah! prithee, what's that?" Valentine—"Why, to keep a secret." Tattle—"O Lord!" Valentine—"*O! exceeding good, to keep a secret, for tho' she should tell, yet she is not to be believed.*" Again, from the same *polite* man. "No, faith, but your fools grow noisy—and, if a man must endure the noise of words without sense, I think the women have more musical voices, and become non-sense better." Jealousy was contemptible, because no man of decent understanding had business to hope for an instant that his wife would be faithful to him.

Here is a song:—

"Tell me no more, I am deceived,
That Chloe's false and common,
I always knew (at least believed)
She was a very woman:
As such I liked, as such caressed,
She still was constant, when possessed,
She could do more for no man.

But oh! her thoughts on others ran,
And that you think a hard thing;
Perhaps she fancied you the man,
And what care I one farthing?
You think she's false, I know she's kind,
I take her body, you her mind,
Who has the better bargain?"

Would you like another from the superb Mr. Congreve (who, by-the-bye, wrote *a novel* that Johnson said he would rather *praise* than *read*)? He will sing it to us, as he sits there, with his handsome open face, regular and somewhat aquiline features, ample forehead, inclined to fat—easy, and with an air of high-bred insolence; his immense wig flowing in full curls over his shoulders towards the small of his back.

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"Thus to a ripe consenting maid,
Poor, old, repenting Delia said,
Would you long preserve your lover,
Would you still his goddess reign,
Never let him all discover,
Never let him much obtain.

Men will admire, adore and die,
While wishing at your feet they lye;
But admitting their embraces.
Wakes 'em from the golden dream;
Nothing's new besides their faces,
Every woman is the same."

Pope now and then tried to be complimentary to women; but even at the very moment of urbane enthusiasm, all he could say in behalf of his best of the gentle sex was, that she was an inferior kind of man.

"And yet, believe me, good as well as ill,
Woman's at best a contradiction still.
Heaven, when it strives to polish all it can
It's last best work, but forms a softer man."

The friend of Stella and Vanessa made an inventory of the furniture of a woman's mind—

"A set of phrases learnt by rote;
A passion for a scarlet coat;
When at a play, to laugh or cry,
Yet cannot tell the reason why.
Never to hold her tongue a minute,
While all she prates has nothing in it.
Whole hours can with a coxcomb sit,
And take his nonsense all for wit;
Her learning mounts to read a song,
But half the words pronouncing wrong," &c.

The poetry, of which the foregoing quotations are extracts, may be regarded as embodying the creed of English gentlemen for more than a century with regard to women. And to do our forefathers justice, their censure was not unreasonable. *Every woman was the same.* And when Richardson wrote, though society had commenced the work of renovation, the world was not only willing to listen to plain words, but plain words only could it understand.

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CHAPTER VIII.

TOBIAS SMOLLETT.

"In February was tried a criminal of a still different complexion. Dr. Smollett was convicted, in the King's Bench, of publishing scurrilous abuse on Admiral Knowles in the 'Critical Review.' Smollett was a worthless man, and only mentioned here because author of a 'History of England,' of the errors in which, posterity ought to be warned. Smollett was bred a sea-surgeon, and turned author. He wrote a tragedy, and sent it to Lord Lyttelton, with whom he was not acquainted, Lord Lyttelton, not caring to point out its defects, civilly advised him to try comedy. He wrote one, and solicited the same lord to recommend it to the stage. The latter excused himself; but promised, if it should be acted, to do all the service in his power for the author. Smollett's return was drawing an abusive portrait of Lord Lyttelton in 'Roderick Random,' a novel—of which sort he published two or three. His next attempt was on the 'History of England,' a work in which he engaged for booksellers, and finished, though four volumes in quarto, in two years; yet an easy task, as being pilfered from other histories. Accordingly, it was little noticed till it came down to the present times; then, though compiled of the libels of the age and the most paltry materials, yet, being heightened by personal invectives, strong Jacobitism and the worst representations of the Duke of Cumberland's conduct in Scotland, the sale was prodigious. Eleven thousand copies of that trash were instantly sold; while, at the same time, the University of Oxford ventured to print but

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two thousand of that inimitable work, 'Lord Clarendon's Life'—a reflection on the age sad to mention, and yet too true to be suppressed. Smollett's work was again printed, and again tasted; it was adorned with wretched prints, except two or three by Strange, who could not refuse his admirable graver to the service of the Jacobite cause. Smollett then engaged in a monthly magazine, called the 'Critical Review,' the scope of which was to decry any work that appeared favourable to the principles of the Revolution. Nor was he single in that measure. The Scotch in the heart of London assumed a dictatorial power of reviling every book that censured the Stuarts, or upheld the Revolution—a provocation they ought to have remembered when the tide rolled back upon them. Smollett, while in prison, undertook a new magazine; and, notwithstanding the notoriety of his dissatisfaction, obtained the King's patent for it by the interest of Mr. Pitt, to whom he had dedicated his history. In the following reign he was hired to write a scurrilous paper, called 'The Briton,' against that very patron, Mr. Pitt."

Such is Horace Walpole's picture of Smollett.

There is another side to the story. Disraeli, in his "Calamities of Authors," says, "Of most 'authors by profession,' who has displayed a more fruitful genius, and exercised a more intense industry, with a loftier sense of his independence than Smollett?"

Tobias George Smollett was born in the year 1721, about two years after the death of Joseph Addison, and about fourteen years after the birth of Fielding. The place of his birth was the old house of Dalquhurn, in the valley of Leven, unquestionably one of the most lovely parts of Britain. His paternal grandfather was Sir James Smollett, of Bonhill, who was educated for the Bar, was advanced to the dignity of a Commissary (Consistorial Judge) of Edinburgh, and when member of the Scottish Parliament for

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the burgh of Dumbarton, lent his aid to dissolve that representative body for ever, being one of the commissioners appointed for framing the union with England. Sir James married a daughter of Sir Aulay Mac Auley, of Ardincaple, and had by her four sons of whom Archibald was the youngest.

This youngest son, Archibald, was guilty of the greatest act of iniquity short of parricide a son can be guilty of; he married a young lady against his father's will. She was endowed with no fortune in the shape of coin, and, what made the son's disobedience yet more aggravating to the father, she was virtuous, beautiful, and of a true womanly mind. Sir James did not forthwith cut his wayward boy, for society would have cried shame on such a violent proceeding; he allowed him the farmhouse of Dalquhurn for a residence, and bestowed on him something approaching sufficient means. Archibald, however, did not tax his father's liberality many years, for he died soon after he had constructed two sons and a daughter.

Of this young family, left dependent on their learned grandpapa, the eldest embraced the military life, and perished at sea by the wrecking of a transport; the girl, Jane, married a certain Mr. Telfer, and had a son who eventually inherited the Judge's estate, Bonhill; and the youngest, Tobias, worked hard, and became celebrated; and, as a consequence of his merit, was represented by one half the world as everything that was infamous, and died worth not very many pence.

Sir James punished the disobedience of his dead son by not leaving his offspring any provision. The old Commissary, doubtless, had a great admiration for patriarchal prerogative, and held that a man ought to be the god of his own household; anyhow he visited the sin of the father on the children. Tobias was fully revenged on the old wretch, for in his novel of "Roderick Random" he called his grand-

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father back into the life beneath the sun, and after rating him plentifully for the hardness of his heart, packed him off to that place which is *never* mentioned, and very rarely thought about, in polite society.

Little Toby, as a child, was reared like Fielding, in accordance with the sentiments of the age, being well whipped every day, whether he deserved it or not; the only difference in his punishments being, that he was flogged a good deal worse when he had not misconducted himself than when he had. After passing some years at the Dumbarton Grammar School, he went to the University of Glasgow, where he studied with more than average diligence. In that city, also, he was bound apprentice to Mr. John Gordon, a respectable surgeon, *et cetera*.

In Glasgow, the youth Tobias commenced the exercise of his talent for sarcasm and ridicule, holding all the "unco guid" of the city up to laughter, and making himself generally disagreeable, as a clever lad of sixteen or seventeen years is too apt to do. He was commonly spoken of as lacking "decorum," and being the exact reverse of proper. "On a winter evening," says Dr. Moore, "when the streets were covered with snow, Smollett happened to be engaged in a snow-ball fight with a few boys of his own age. Among his associates was the apprentice of that surgeon who is supposed to have been delineated under the name of Crab, in "Roderick Random." He entered his shop while his apprentice was in the heat of the engagement. On the return of the latter, the master remonstrated severely with him for his negligence in quitting the shop. The youth excused himself by saying that, while he was employed making up a prescription, a fellow had hit him with a snow-ball, and he had been in pursuit of the delinquent. "A mighty probable story truly," said the master, in an ironical tone, "I wonder how long I should stand here," added he, "before it would enter any mortal's head to throw a snow-ball at me." While

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he was holding his head erect, with a most scornful air, he received a very severe blow in the face with a snow-ball. Smollett, who stood behind the pillar at the shop door, had heard the dialogue; and perceiving that his companion was puzzled for an answer, he extricated him by a repartee equally smart and *à propos*." I don't well see how it was possible for Mr. Crab, or Mrs. Crab, or the little Crabs to like Tobias after this! But he was a great favourite with the girls of the place. Girls always have a *penchant* for a naughty boy; and then this naughty boy wrote poetry about their eyelashes, and kissed them on all safe occasions without being so rude as to ask their leave.

In his *eighteenth* year, Smollett found himself penniless, for his amiable grandfather died in that year without leaving him even a shilling to buy a rope with, and of course his well-to-do relations declined to assist him. They all said that poverty was a fine thing for a young man, and comforted their luckless kinsman with the assurance that adversity would "bring out all the stuff that was in him." To hear rich relations talk to a needy petitioner, induces the belief that the best thing a young man of fortune can do, is to make over his wealth to his enemy, or, if he has no enemy, get rid of it by placing it in the hands of a prodigiously religious banker. In his *nineteenth* year Smollett went to London, without patronage and without money, but with a wonderful tragedy, called "The Regicide," in his pocket. This drama ought, of course, in the author's estimation, to have made his fortune; but, what with the folly of noble patrons who wouldn't take it up, and the stupidity of managers who wouldn't present it, it did not do any such thing. Finding society did not just at that time stand in need of his dramatic genius, and that he ran a good chance of starving, unless he turned lacquey or pickpocket, he gladly accepted the appointment of surgeon's-mate, on board a

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ship of the line, in the expedition to Carthagena in 1741. Than such a post none can be conceived more calculated to disgust a man with the remotest affinity to a gentleman. A surgeon's mate in those days, was treated worse than a Jew in "the dear old middle ages;" on board, the superior officers made him their drudge, and spoke of him, if they ever condescended to speak of him at all, as they would of a mangy dog, and the common sailors naturally hated him for being so despicable, and yet their better.

Smollett was no great length of time in the service. He quitted it in the West Indies; and after a residence of considerable duration there, he returned to London in 1746, four years after the appearance of Fielding's first novel, "Joseph Andrews." The great result of his West Indian excursion was, winning the heart and hand of the beautiful and accomplished Miss Lascelles, whom he married, after his return to England, in 1747.

On his landing in Britain after an absence of about five years, the news of the day was the blood-thirsty vengeance taken on the unfortunate Highlanders, after the battle of Culloden, by the blood-stained victor. The following passage, nervous and simple in style, from Smollett's history, will best tell what stories came to his ears. "In the month of May the Duke of Cumberland advanced with the army into the Highlands as far as Fort Augustus, where he encamped; and sent off detachments on all hands to hunt down the fugitives, and lay waste the country with fire and sword. The castles of Glengary and Lochiel were plundered and burned; every house, hut, or habitation met with the same fate without distinction; all the cattle and provision were carried off; the men were either shot on the mountains like wild beasts, or put to death in cold blood, without form of trial. The women, after having seen their husbands and fathers murdered, were subjected to brutal violation, and then turned out naked with their children, to starve on

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barren heaths. One whole family was enclosed in a barn and consumed to ashes. Those ministers of vengeance were so alert in the execution of their office that, in a few days there was neither house, cottage, man, nor beast to be seen within a compass of fifty miles; all was ruin, silence, and desolation."

On receiving intelligence of such barbarities, his blood rushed through his heart hot as fire, and tears burnt his cheeks. He felt that which, when a poet feels it, he must speak or die. The outpouring of his indignant pity who is ignorant of?

THE TEARS OF SCOTLAND.

WRITTEN IN THE YEAR 1746.

Mourn, hapless Caledonia, mourn
Thy banish'd peace, thy laurels torn!
Thy sons for slaughter long renown'd,
Lie slaughter'd on their native ground.
Thy hospitable roofs no more
Invite the stranger to the door;
In smoky ruins sunk they lie,
The monuments of cruelty.

The wretched owner sees afar
His all become the prey of war;
Bethinks him of his babes and wife,
Then smites his breast and curses life.
Thy swains are famish'd on the rocks,
Where once they fed their wanton flocks;
Thy ravish'd virgins shriek in vain;
Thy infants perish on the plain.

What boots it, then, in ev'ry clime,
Through the wide-spreading waste of time,
Thy martial glory, crown'd with praise,
Still shone with undiminish'd blaze?
Thy tow'ring spirit now is broke,
Thy neck is bended to the yoke.
What foreign arms could never quell,
By civil rage and rancour fell.

Thy rural pipe and merry lay
No more shall cheer the happy day;
No social scenes of gay delight
Beguile the dreary winter night,

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No strains but those of sorrow flow,
And nought be heard but sounds of woe;
While the pale phantoms of the slain
Glide nightly o'er the silent plain.

O! baneful curse! O! fatal morn!
Accurs'd to ages yet unborn!
The sons against their father stood,
The parent shed his children's blood.
Yet when the rage of battle ceas'd,
The victor's soul was not appeas'd;
The naked and forlorn must feel
Devouring flames and murd'ring steel.

The pious mother, doom'd to death,
Forsaken, wanders o'er the heath;
The bleak wind whistles round her head,
Her helpless orphans cry for bread.
Bereft of shelter, food, and friend,
She views the shades of night descend:
And, stretch'd beneath th' inclement skies,
Weeps o'er her tender babes—and dies

Smollett and some friends met in a tavern, when all the company settled down to cards, with the exception of the poet who, taking a seat apart from his companions at a writing-table, occupied himself with polishing these verses. Graham of Gartmore, observing the earnest expression of his countenance, charged him with being engaged in the composition of poetry. Smollett replied by reading the stanzas aloud. On his finishing the recitation, those present made their criticisms, and concurred in saying they were too strongly expressive of sentiments which would give offence to persons in power. At these remonstrances a flash of generous anger ran from Smollett's eyes, and resuming his seat he dashed off, on the spur of the moment, one more stanza for a conclusion.

While the warm blood bedews my veins,
And unimpaired remembrance reigns,
Resentment of my country's fate,
Within my filial breast shall beat.
Yes, spite of thine insulting foe,
My sympathising verse shall flow.
Mourn, hapless Caledonia, mourn,
Thy banished peace, thy laurels torn!

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Bravo Smollett! It is easy and safe work to wax indignant with wrong when supporters are ready in numbers to cheer and applaud; but it requires a brave heart to face the foe when friends warily hold off, and say "be cautious."

When the marriage of Miss Lascelles and Smollett took place, the lady was understood to be the heiress of £3,000; but all her husband ever obtained from this source was an expensive lawsuit. Finding it requisite to get funds by some means besides wishing, Smollett wrote "The Adventures of Roderick Random," in the year 1748, the success of which was very great. He had before, in 1746 and 1747, published two poetical satires, "Advice" and "Reproof."

From the publication of his first novel to that of his last —in other words till his dying day—Smollett's life was one of severe literary exertion. His tragedy, "The Regicide," composed in youth, was published immediately after "Roderick Random;" in 1751 "Peregine Pickle," appeared; in 1752 he gave the world "An Essay on the External Use of Water;" in 1753 came forth another novel, "The Adventures of Ferdinand Count Fathom," which was succeeded by "A New Version of Don Quixote;" he was editor of the "Critical Review;" in 1757 he compiled and published without his name "A Compendium of Authentic and Entertaining Voyages," and in the same year was presented his comedy, "The Reprisals, or the Tars of Old England;" in 1758 was published his "Complete History of England;" which, wonderful to be said, was composed and finished for the press within fourteen months; in 1760 and 1761 appeared in various numbers of the *British Magazine or Monthly Repository*, "The Adventures of Sir Launcelot Greaves;" in 1761 was published the "Continuation of the History of England;" in 1763 he assisted, at least with his name, in a translation of Voltaire's works; next came his "Travels through France and Italy;" in 1769 he sent forth his political satire, "The Adventures of an Atom;" and in

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1771 was published "The Expedition of Humphry Clinker." When it is added that the foregoing is not a complete list of his works, no one will be inclined to question Smollett's industry.

It was far harder work then to get a comfortable income by authorcraft than it is now; and Smollett throughout his career, evinced an anxiety to have other and surer means than the profession of letters for the support of himself and wife. On his return from the West Indies, he set up in London as "a medical man;" and about the year 1751, having obtained the degree of Doctor of Medicine from a university, probably a foreign one, he made an attack on fortune in the character of a physician. Smollett had great taste for medical quackery—and so far was well fitted for success; his novels team with anecdotes calculated, if they were not so coarse, to please the sisterhood of monthly nurses; and he delighted in the jargon and cant of his order, in talking about the "pia mater" and "dura mater," and membranes and tissues, and all kinds of disgusting things to simple people who only knew, that the gentleman was "going on" about what they were unable to understand. He had also another great requisite for success in the medical profession —a most pleasing personal appearance. If Scarron and Oliver Goldsmith are instances that novelists may be very ugly, there are many cases to prove that nature has not determined that all fiction-writers must be hideous. The gentle Addison, the commanding Swift, the jovial Steele, the high-bred Fielding, the elegant Sterne, and Smollett manly and ardent,—what a band of noble creatures! Smollett was eminently handsome; his features were prepossessing and continually enlivened by a roguish smile, his stature was imposing, and his manner, though often impetuous and boisterous, was dignified. He was, moreover, a great favourite with the ladies, and yet he did not succeed as a physician. The secret of his failure lay in his ebullient temper. He

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was unable to rate a fool at his worth and not tell him what the amount was; "nervous ladies" who came to consult him were requested to go to the devil, and if they demurred were told he would help them on the road. His temper was emphatically that of a generous, undisciplined Briton; he was everlastingly quarrelling with those he came in contact with—more often with his friends than his foes. One day he would cudgel a man in the street till the fellow was almost dead; shortly after he would attack an obnoxious individual in the columns of his journal, and work away for a brief period at persuading the world mankind had never before seen such a monster of turpitude as his adversary. After the squabble had come to an end he was amiable enough to the object of his late hostility, and was always ready to make the *amende honourable*, but during the season of irritation his temper often displayed itself in mean peevishness. When Peregrine Pickle appeared he had a feud with Fielding;—so he "had at him" in the following gentlemanly style, in that work;—

"I advise Mr. Spondy to give him a refusal of this same pastoral; and who knows but he may have the good fortune to be listed in the number of his beef-eaters, in which case he may, in process of time, be provided for in the Customs or Church; *and when he is inclined to marry his own cook-maid, his gracious patron may condescend to give the bride away, and may finally settle him in his old age as a trading Westminster justice.*" This taunt of the "cook-maid" was contemptible when made by a woman nursed amongst aristocratic prejudices; what is it coming from Smollett? But in his history Smollett did justice to Fielding when he remarked, "The genius of Cervantes was transfused into the novels of Fielding, who painted the characters and ridiculed the follies of life with equal strength, humour, and propriety." In the same way he unsaid his virulent observations on Garrick and Lord Lyttelton. Of men who are

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the victims of their own irritability some have an aptitude to love those they have wronged, and others to hate those they have passionately loved;—Smollett was of the former and nobler sort.

The course of Smollett's life is best seen by reviewing the list of his works, and remembering that he, a man battling with poverty and not blessed with good health, wrote them, and was also a constant worker on newspapers. He was always at work. After the publication of his "Don Quixote," for which he obtained a liberal subscription, he paid a visit to his native country, that he might see his mother, who then resided at Scotson, in Peeblesshire, with her daughter and son-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Telfer. The mother and son had not seen each other for more than fifteen years. How would ladies like to have railways abolished, and return to the slow locomotion of a century back, and be thought lucky women if their children in the great world paid them visits as often as once in fifteen years? We know of a mother living in one of the sweetest, loveliest districts of England who thinks her lot a very hard one, if a certain scapegrace of a son she has does not come and kiss her at least once in every three months! Dr. Moore relates, "On Smollett's arrival he was introduced to his mother, with the connivance of Mrs. Telfer, as a gentleman from the West Indies, who was intimately acquainted with her son. The better to support his assumed character, he endeavoured to preserve a serious countenance, approaching to a frown; but, while his mother's eyes were riveted on his countenance, he could not refrain from smiling; she immediately sprang from her chair, and, throwing her arms around his neck, exclaimed, 'Ah, my son! my son! I have found you at last.'

"She afterwards told him that if he had kept his austere looks, and continued to gloom, he might have escaped

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detection some time longer; 'but your old roguish smile,' added she, 'betrayed you at once.'"

The most famous, and for him the most creditable contest in which Smollett engaged was with Admiral Knowles, who, in a pamphlet, vindicated his conduct in the secret expedition, in 1757, against Rochfort, which was such a shameful failure. Smollett, in his notice of this defence, as editor of the "Critical Review," said of Admiral Knowles, "He is an admiral without conduct, an engineer without knowledge, an officer without resolution, and a man without veracity." In these days of "slashers" such observations would scarcely ruffle the temper of the persons against whom they might be directed; indeed, public characters of this generation enjoy being well "cut up," and men are apt to suspect they have no merit unless there are some envious enough to vilify and misrepresent them. But a hundred years ago "the liberty of the Press" was not understood; Demagogue Wilkes, almost in our own times, was prosecuted for, and made famous by articles in the "North Briton," which would now be held dull and lifeless for the want of venom and personal abuse. Knowles was so furious at Smollett's attack that he prosecuted the printer of the Review, avowing that his only object in doing so was to discover the author of the offensive passage, that he might, should the writer be a gentleman, demand another sort of satisfaction of him. Smollett, who was a lion in courage and ferocity, on this came forward when the court was about to pronounce judgment in the case, and declared himself the author. Admiral Knowles—he who was so indignant at being pronounced "a man without veracity,"—asserted his character by enforcing judgment for a fine of £100, and obtained a sentence against the defendant of three months imprisonment!!! Jeremy Bentham says, "But it was a falsehood, a wilful falsehood.

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And where is the man who, while he calls upon another to expiate the falsehood with his life, can boldly say that he has never uttered a falsehood; that he has not done so more than once; that he has not done so frequently? 'The jealousy of honour,' as it is called, if pursued to its recesses, will be found more frequently the self-convicted, self-condemning sense of frailty, the exhibition of inwardly avowed assailableness, than the evidence of conscious strength and purity."

The best and most fortunate part of Smollett's life was a hard struggle; its last years were of ever increasing gloom. In 1763, he lost his only child—a lovely girl in her fifteenth year—to whom his devotion was unusually passionate. The death of that "dear one" was a blow he never recovered from; he continued to be capable of great intellectual exertion, but immediately the excitement of labour was removed, his thoughts returned to that sad loss. His health, which had for long been in an unsatisfactory state, now failed him. From 1763 to 1766 he resided in France and Italy for the benefit of change. On his return, he published his "Travels through France and Italy." The cynicism and diseased state of his mind, as exhibited in this account of his wanderings, were ridiculed by Sterne:—"The learned Smelfungus," says that sentimental writer, "travelled from Boulogne to Paris, from Paris to Rome, and so on; but he set out with the spleen and jaundice; and every object he passed was discoloured and distorted. He wrote an account of them, but 'twas nothing but the account of his miserable feelings. I met Smelfungus in the grand portico of the Pantheon; he was just coming out of it. 'Tis nothing but a huge cock-pit,' said he. 'I wish you had said nothing worse of the Venus of Medicis,' replied I; for in passing through Florence, I had heard he had fallen upon the goddess, and used her worse than a common strumpet, without the least provocation in nature.

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"I popp'd upon Smelfungus again at Turin, in his return home; and a sad tale of sorrowful adventures he had to tell, 'wherein he spoke of moving accidents by flood and field, and of the cannibals that each other eat; the anthropophagi.' He had been flayed alive, and bedevil'd, and used worse than St. Bartholomew at every stage he had come at. 'I'll tell it,' cried Smelfungus, 'to the world.' 'You had better tell it,' said I, 'to your physician'"

On his return to Britain, in 1766, he saw his mother once more before her death, which now took place. His health by this time was totally broken. Constant and acute rheumatism and the pain of a frightful ulcer caused him excruciating agonies; but he still worked. In 1769, he published "The Adventures of an Atom," and then disease, yet more violent and torturing, attacked him. He was ordered to a warmer climate. To assist him in obedience, attempts were made to get him the consulship of a Mediterranean port, but of course the country refused to reward his merit, as he was still alive. Dr. Armstrong, however, a friend and countryman, procured the invalid a house at Monte Novo, a village situated on the side of a mountain overlooking the sea, in the neighbourhood of Leghorn. To this charming retreat, the childless Smollett and his wife betook themselves, and here it was he prepared for the press his far best novel, "The Expedition of Humphrey Clinker." This unspeakably excellent work was published in 1771, and on the 21st October, of the same year, at Monte Novo, expired Tobias Smollett, in the fifty-second year of his age.

Regret for his dead child, the harass of distressed circumstances, the depressing prospect of dying without having made a provision for his wife, whom he loved with all the manly tenderness of his nature, and a bitter sense of neglect, accelerated the death of one of the bravest and most generous of men.

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How was it no one helped this noble being in his dark decline—darker still, had it not been for that intellect that shone the brighter as the gloom of death drew more near? Did none commiserate his condition? Oh, yes, he had plenty of sympathy! though no help. His *Scotch* friends said he ought to have saved his money when he earned it; that he got £2,000 for his histories, and was well paid for all his work, but he would give his substance to the desolate and distressed, forgetting that *charity begins at home!* His cousin, Smollett of Bonhill, had in all, two thousand pounds a year and not a child to inherit it. Smollett himself was the heir of entail to this man, and would, had he lived a few years longer, have possessed his landed estate, for the niggard quickly followed the man of genius to the unknown land. Why did not this wealthy cousin place an income at Smollett's disposal? Was he at variance with him? Was he careless of the honour brought to the family by his kinsman's achievements? Did he feel it a disgrace that one of his name should be known to have passed through the shifts of a poor author, as Boswell's son blushed to think that his father had adored Johnson and written his life? None of these. When the news of Smollett's death reached Bonhill, the lord of that mansion mourned for the loss of his distinguished relative, offered the sacrifice of tears to his memory, and caused to be erected in his honour, near the old farm-house of Dalquhurn, *a monument* in the form of a column, which the combined genius of Professor George Stewart, of Edinburgh, John Ramsay, Esq., of Ochtertyre, and Dr. Johnson, adorned with what Sir Walter Scott calls a *nervous* and *classical* inscription!

What was his sister doing? She was in opulent circumstances; how came it she did not give aid? Her husband may have hindered her from obeying the dictates of affection. It is to be hoped such was the case, for 'tis better to believe in the existence of ten wicked men, than one bad woman.

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But the sad story is not yet told. We will give the conclusion in the words of Dr. Anderson. "To add to the regret which every reader of sensibility must feel at the untoward fortune that attended Smollett through life, his widow was left in straitened circumstances in a foreign country. The desire of being independent had never disposed Smollett to accumulate money; and his slender property had been considerably diminished by the frequent journeys which he undertook for the recovery of his health. Of the small portion which remained for the maintenance of his widow, he appointed Mr. Graham, of Gartmore, and Mr. Bontein, trustees. The delicacy of her constitution, and the neglect of his relations, induced her to prefer the climate of Italy to that of England, and to reside at Leghorn, the habitation of many of his countrymen; the scene of his latest connections, and the place of his dust. About twelve years after his death, spent in loneliness and grief, she was deprived of her scanty resource against the necessities of old age, by an unavoidable calamity, which drove her from her solitary dwelling, and reduced her to a deplorable dependence on the accommodation and support of the benevolent merchants of Leghorn. To relieve her from the misery of extreme indigence, which it would seem might have been either prevented by the liberality of his cousin, Mr. Smollett, or removed by the well-timed application of a small portion of the wealth of his more fortunate sister, she had recourse to the aid of private charity among her friends at Bath."

And so the curtain falls on Smollett's bride, the beautiful Miss Lascelles!

If the curses of posterity reach the soul of a bad man, that James Smollett, of Bonhill, is in a hell it makes one weep to think of.

Said Campbell, on Smollett's failing to obtain a consulship to a Mediterranean port, "to find the man whose

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genius has given exhilaration to millions, thus reduced to beg, and to be refused the means that might have smoothed the pillow of his death bed in a foreign country, is a circumstance that fills the mind rather too strongly with the recollection of Cervantes."

Smollett and Fielding have always been in vague criticism placed side by side, and held to resemble each other. It would however be difficult to say in what this similitude consists. They both were writers in the same age, they both wrote in newspapers, and composed novels; the same may be said of Sir Bulwer Lytton and the author of the "Mysteries of London." A curious critic once discerned two points of resemblance between the poet Moore and Jeremy Bentham—they both used the paper and ink of the same manufacturers.

Sir Walter Scott, in his very interesting memoir of Smollett, labours to establish this parallel in other matters than literary qualifications and achievements. "Fielding and Smollett," says Sir Walter, "were both born in the highest rank of society, both educated to learned professions, yet both were obliged to follow miscellaneous literature as a means of subsistence." Smollett was the son of a Scotch farmer, and the grandson of a commissary, and M.P. for a burgh in the Scottish Parliament; Fielding was the son of a lieut.-general in the king's army, the great grandson of an earl, the near relation of some of the best families in the kingdom, and of the same blood with the proudest of European royalty. Smollett was educated at the grammar-school of Dumbarton, and in the shop of a Glasgow apothecary; Fielding was reared at Eton, from which aristocratic college he removed to reside in a foreign university. Smollett entered life in a despised position of a profession which in his day was anything rather than a learned one; Fielding, as a young man, burst upon town in the character of a man of fashion as much as one of wit—a writer of plays

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unquestionably, but a gentleman of breeding and birth; the intimate associate of the noble of the land. The highest dignity Smollett ever attained to in an organised profession was a physician's degree, conferred by it is not known what foreign university; Fielding was a member of the English bar and a magistrate. Sir Walter Scott was not the man to underrate such distinctions as these; his writings abound with evidence that he was rather too ready than too slow to discern and pay respect to minute gradations in social rank. He knew as well as any one that Fielding did, by birth and belongings, unquestionably appertain to the aristocratic ranks of British society, and that Smollett did not. Why then did he state that their positions in those respects were the same? why institute the comparison? Simply for this reason; Sir Walter was a Scotchman, so was Smollett. In like manner Sir Walter's patriotic zeal leads him into the strangest mistakes when considering Smollett's works. "To compare 'Ferdinand Count Fathom' to the 'Jonathan Wild' of Fielding, would be perhaps unfair to the latter author; yet, the works being composed on the same plan, (a very bad one, as we think) we cannot help placing them by the side of each other." It has already been observed how Sir Walter missed the meaning of 'Jonathan Wild.' But here he makes a *positive* and *aggressive* error that may be cited as a wonderful instance how men of high genius may say and do very stupid things. Few people will deny that "Ferdinand Count Fathom" is about the most wretchedly managed novel our language contains, and "Jonathan Wild" is a production of fearful talent. But this may be regarded as a matter of opinion. *The plan*, however, of the two books is a question of *fact*, which common sense can decide on as quickly as it can on any simple matter. The truth is, the only point of similarity in the two works is that in both the principal character is a very bad man. Beyond this there is no mutual resem-

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blance. Fielding, in his "Jonathan Wild," takes the most abandoned wretch that can be imagined from the refuse and scum of London vice, leads him through every stage of that coarse sensuality which a human beast loves to wallow in; makes him cast aside the honour that the proverb supposes to exist among thieves; shows him plotting the destruction of his companions in guilt, and seeing them swing on the gallows without a twinge of remorse, and finally sends him, after having combated the arguments of the priest, through the gallows into eternity—unrepentant as he had lived. Such is the *story*; the master-object of which is to be found in the by-play. At every fresh step in the course of the vile creature, Fielding compares him with what are popular examples of human "greatness;" and everywhere by the most subtle suggestions, enforced by a fiendish, mocking laugh, the reader is compelled, however he may strive against the power of the tempter, to say "this atrocious criminal, hideous outcast as he is, *without one redeeming quality*, is not less heroic than those 'great men' we follow with applause; is not less pure of heart than those ministers of religion whom we venerate, and before whom we humble ourselves; his guilt is as good as most men's virtue; his degradation as bright in reality as what is called honour; his disregard of God and man, true philosophy." "Ferdinand Count Fathom" is a very different character, and teaches quite another lesson. He is no filthy brute from the kennels of St. Giles; but a polished, elegant, witty, heartless gentleman of fashion, who after ruining poor girls, and achieving a celebrity as sharper and debauchee, eventually on coming to poverty finds out the error of his ways, is forgiven by his old benefactor whom he had grossly injured, and retires with a broken and *contrite heart*, and a pension of about £50 into a secluded village, where he is supposed to pass the remainder of his days in horticulture and church-going. We believe Smollett

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intended in this history to preach "honesty is the best policy, and that virtue meets with its reward." Fielding in his frightful satire said, "'tis all nonsense about honesty being the best policy, there is no such thing as honesty, no such thing as virtue—all men are alike, rogues and liars; some thieves are called good and pious, some thieves wicked and abominable—principles are only hats: you wear them to keep your head warm."

In genius Smollett was far below Fielding. The latter was a man of originality of mind, of earnestness and depth of thought, as well as gracefulness of fancy and playful wit; such a one as the entire world produces not once in a century. The former had a superior intellect; was a man with a clear head and pure warm heart; a giant when compared with the majority of his brethren, but of small stature when standing by the side of Fielding. Smollett was the pupil of Fielding; and his imitations of his master are such as no other man of his day could have achieved, but they miss all that of the originals which constitutes the essence of the highest order of art. Many accomplished and noble-minded gentlemen copying Pope wrote poems, of which the numbers were as smooth, the style as classic, the figures as varied as those of the "Rape of the Lock," yet they all lack that something of excellence possessed by the best of Pope's works, which the critical taste can discern, though it can neither produce nor aptly describe it. So with Smollett; he did not comprehend the depths of life like Fielding; his quick observation and ready powers of description dashed off in animated colours, the dress, the manners, the superficial features of society,—but the incautious word, the artless look, the rapid glance (though he marked them all) were not to him a language talking of those strangely intricate hopes which constitute our existence. Smollett cannot be called "a teacher;" he had a lively sense of humour and a laugh that drew all who heard it into

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mirth, but his ridicule had no further object than the mere enjoyment of itself; his fictions are none of them framed to instruct,—if they were intended to do so they must be regarded as failures; his heroes are idle, selfish, dissolute young men, with masculine grossness and feminine vanity, whose vilenesses are never redeemed by any nobler act than that of fighting a duel; his heroines are commonplace young women, whom he makes attractive by exhibiting them in positions opposed to delicacy. His coarseness, which of course came to him from the times, is more displeasing than Fielding's, because you do not see beneath it a mind reverencing the pure, and lamenting its inability to attain to the good. Fielding with all the other merits had the *gentleness* of a truly great nature; Smollett had all the defects as well as the excellencies of a constitution which, mentally as well as physically, is best characterised as vigorous.

Still Smollett is in some respects a more amusing author to peruse at this day than his master; for we do not go to those old novels for religious instruction, but for an insight into past society—into the trifling customs of our ancestors, their habiliments, modes of address, fashions of eating; and as Smollett was made to place a higher value on these little things, so we have in his pages the better pourtrayal of them. As an instance, take the inventory Roderick Random gives us of his wardrobe.

"My wardrobe consisted of five fashionable coats full mounted, two of which were plain, one of cut velvet, one trimmed with gold, and another with silver lace; two frocks, one of white drab, with large plate buttons, the other of blue with gold binding; one waistcoat of gold brocade; one of blue satin, embroidered with silver; one of green silk, trimmed with figured broad gold lace; one of black silk, with fringes; one of white satin, one of black cloth, and one of scarlet six pair of cloth breeches; one pair of crimson,

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and another of black velvet; twelve pair of white silk stockings, as many of black silk, and the same number of fine cotton; one hat, laced with gold *point d'Espagne*, another with silver lace scolloped, a third with gold binding, and a fourth plain; three dozen of fine ruffled shirts, as many neckcloths; one dozen of cambric handkerchiefs, and the like number of silk. The other moveables, which I possessed by the generosity and friendship of Strap, were a gold watch with a chased case, two valuable diamond rings, two mourning swords, one with a silver handle, and a fourth cut-steel inlaid with gold; a diamond stock-buckle, and a set of stone buckles for the knees and shoes; a pair of silver-mounted pistols with rich housings; a gold-headed cane, and a snuff box of tortoiseshell, mounted with gold, having the picture of a lady at the top." Does not this passage carry the reader into other society than any to be found in this Manchester and Brummagem epoch? Of what great price were the items of a gentleman's costume once! How indispensable for success! How hard to be obtained! Smollett sits down gravely to enumerate the articles of his hero's equipment and the quality of their construction with as much gravity and as lively a sense of the importance of his task as we discern in Homer when describing the helms, and shields, and lengthy spears of his warriors! What would critics now say of any fiction-writer who, bent on being true to the classic models, should make his Pendennis or Copperfield thus give the history of his actions:—"On receiving my luggage at the great hotel, near the Great Western Railway Station, from one of G.W.R.C's trucks, I proceeded to my private apartment with my possessions, and having unlocked the two black trunks, the Russia-leather portmanteau, and the carpet-bag, made a careful and exact inventory of my wearing apparel. In linen, I had twelve plain shirts, new and of good make, value 8s. 6d. each; half-a-dozen dress shirts with embroidered fronts,

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value 25s. each; three dozen collars, Albert all-rounders, value 12s. per dozen; ten pairs of drawers; one dozen night-shirts (night-caps I never use), and two dozen pairs of stockings. In *cloth clothes*, I discovered myself to possess three suits of dress, one *quite* new, one as good as new, one rather the worse for wear and with a grease-spot on the right wristband," &c., &c., and so on, through all the usual toilet paraphernalia, boots, studs, rings, chains, pomades, dressing-case gim-cracks, walking-canes, siphonia dreadnoughts, umbrellas, and gutta-percha goloshes.

One of the principal points of difference between the early and the recent novel is, the simplicity of the old humourist, the candour and openness with which he makes his jest—caring for nothing so much as that the reader should know what the joke is, so that he may laugh honestly and abundantly. As an instance of this take from "Peregrine Pickle" the first part of

"CHAPTER LXXI.

"WHEREIN PEREGRINE HUMBLES A NOTED HECTOR.

"Among those who never failed to reside at Bath during the season, was a certain person, who, from the most abject misery, had, by his industry and art at play, amassed about £15,000; and though his character was notorious, insinuated himself so far into the favour of what is called the best company, that very few private parties of pleasure took place in which he was not principally concerned. He was of gigantic stature, a most intrepid countenance; and his disposition, naturally overbearing, had, in the course of his adventures and success, acquired a most intolerable degree of insolence and vanity. By the ferocity of his features, and audacity of his behaviour, he had obtained a reputation for the most undaunted courage, which had been confirmed by divers adventures in which he had humbled the most assuming heroes of his own fraternity; so that he

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now reigned chief Hector of the place with unquestioned authority.

"With this son of fortune was Peregrine one evening engaged at play; and so successful, that he could not help informing his friend of his good luck. Godfrey hearing the description of the loser, immediately recognised the person, whom he had known at Tunbridge, and assuring Pickle that he was a sharper of the first water, cautioned him against any further connexion with such a dangerous companion, who (he affirmed) had suffered him to win a small sum, that he might be encouraged to lose a much greater sum upon some other occasion.

"Our young gentleman treasured up this advice; and though he did not scruple to give the gamester an opportunity of retrieving his loss when he next day demanded his revenge, he absolutely refused to proceed, after he had refunded his winning. The other, who considered him as a hot-headed, unthinking youth, endeavoured to inflame his pride to a continuance of the game, by treating his skill with scorn and contempt; and, among other sarcastic expressions, advised him to go to school again before he pretended to engage with masters of the art. Our hero, incensed at this arrogance, replied with great warmth, that he knew himself sufficiently qualified for playing with men of honour who deal upon the square, and hoped he should always deem it infamous either to learn or practise the tricks of a professed gamester. 'Blood and thunder! meaning me, sir?' (cried the artist, raising his voice, and curling his visage into a most intimidating frown.) 'Zounds! I'll cut the throat of any scoundrel who has the presumption to suppose that I don't play as honourably as e'er a nobleman in the kingdom; and I insist on an explanation from you, sir; or by hell and brimstone, I shall expect other sort of satisfaction.' Peregrine (whose blood by this time boiled within him) answered without hesitation, 'Far from thinking your demand un-

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reasonable, I will immediately explain myself without reserve, and tell you that, upon unquestionable authority, I believe you to be an impudent rascal and common cheat.'

"The Hector was so amazed and confounded at the freedom of this declaration, which he thought no man on earth would venture to make in his presence, that, for some minutes, he could not recollect himself; but at length whispered a challenge in the ear of our hero, which was accordingly accepted. When they arrived next morning upon the field, the gamester, arming his countenance with all its terrors, advanced with a sword of monstrous length, and putting himself in a posture, called aloud, in a most terrific voice, 'Draw, damn ye, draw; I will this instant send you to your fathers.' The youth was not slow in complying with his desire; his weapon was unsheathed in a moment, and he began the attack with such unexpected spirit and address, that his adversary, having made a shift with great difficulty to parry the first pass, retreated a few paces and demanded a parley, in which he endeavoured to persuade the young man that to lay a man of his character under the necessity of chastising his insolence, was the most rash and inconsiderate step that he could possibly have taken; but that he had compassion upon his youth, and was willing to spare him if he would surrender his sword, and promise to ask pardon in public for the offence he had given. Pickle was so much exasperated at this unparalleled effrontery that, without deigning to make the least reply, he flung his own hat in the proposer's face, and renewed the charge with such undaunted agility that the gamester, finding himself in manifest hazard of his life, betook himself to his heels, and fled homewards with incredible speed, being closely pursued by Peregrine, who, having sheathed his sword, pelted him with stones as he ran, and compelled him to go that same day into banishment from Bath, where he had domineered so long."

The portion of "Peregrine Pickle" which, perhaps, more

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than any other illustrates the taste of Smollett's age is, "The Memoirs of a Lady of Quality." The introduction of that long, dreary history of the intrigues of a woman of fashion into a novel, the narrative of which was not in any way concerned with that lady's proceedings, may well astonish this era of *correct* literature. "The Lady of Quality" was the beautiful demirep, Lady Vane, of whom Johnson, in his "Vanity of Human Wishes," wrote,

> 'Yet *Vane* could tell what ills from beauty spring,
> And Sedley cursed the form that pleas'd a king.'

Her Ladyship furnished Smollett with the particulars of her shame, and actually (so did she glory in her infamy) paid him a large sum of money for inserting them in his work. The other day Lola Montes paid an American writer to compose the history of her life; but who has read it? Who in decent society would read the biography of such a woman? What should we say if Dickens were to season his next work with a sketch of a high-born harridan? Smollett's "Memoirs of a Lady of Quality," however, dull and stupid as they are, were perused by all classes of readers, and they were applauded, not for any merit they possessed as a set-off against their demerits, but simply because they treated of vice in the upper ranks of society. People were not content with having devoured this nasty trash, but found it necessary to squabble about and imitate it. The "Memoirs" were quickly followed by "A Letter to Lady V——, on her memoirs in Peregrine Pickle," 8vo., 1751; "History of Lady Frail," by Dr. Hill, 12mo., 1751. "Parallel between the Character of Lady Frail and the Lady of Quality in Peregrine Pickle," 8vo., 1751; an "Apology for the conduct of Lady Frail," 8vo., 1751, &c. These and other like works the writer of these pages has read in the British Museum Library; and his advice to the reader is *not* to go and do likewise.

Members of the English bar were in Smollett's time

much like what they are now, if we may judge from the following passage from "The Adventures of Ferdinand Count Fathom."

"He harangued upon taste and genius to the abbé, who was a wit and critic, *ex-officio* or rather *ex-cestitis*: for, a young pert Frenchman, the very moment he puts on the *petit collet*, or little band, looks upon himself as an inspired son of Apollo; and every one of the fraternity thinks it incumbent upon him to assert the divinity of his mission; in a word, the abbés are a set of people that bear a strong analogy to the Templars in London. Fools of each fabric, sharpers of all sorts, and dunces of every degree, profess themselves of both orders: the Templar is, generally speaking, a prig—so is the abbé; both are distinguished by an air of petulance and self-conceit, which holds a middle rank betwixt the insolence of a first-rate buck, and the learned pride of a supercilious pedant. The abbé is supposed to be the younger brother in quest of preferment in the church: the Temple is considered as a receptacle or seminary for younger sons, intended for the bar; but a great number of each profession turn aside into other paths of life, long before they reach these proposed goals. An abbé is often metamorphosed into a foot-soldier; a Templar sometimes sinks into an attorney's clerk; the gallies of France abound with abbés; and many Templars may be found in our American plantations; not to mention those who have made a public exit nearer home. Yet, I would not have it thought, that my description includes every individual of those societies. Some of the greatest scholars, politicians, and wits, that ever Europe produced, have worn the habit of an abbé; and many of the most noble families in England derived their honours from those who have studied law in the Temple; the worthy sons of every community shall always be sacred from my censure and ridicule; and, while I laugh at the folly of particular members, I can still honour and revere the institution."

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What a gentlemanly creature the English gentleman was a century from this date, what refined and delicate laws he had for measuring the merit of his fellow-men, the following extract from "Count Fathom" will show! "A dispute immediately ensued, for the Englishman made his addresses to the lady without paying the least regard to the priority of the other's claim; and she being pleased with his attachment, did not scruple to renounce his rival, who swore by the thunder, lightning, and sacrament, that he would not quit his pretensions for any prince in Christendom, much less for a little English Chevalier, whom he had already honoured too much in condescending to be his companion.

"The Knight, provoked at this stately declaration, which was the immediate effect of anger and ebriety, eyed his antagonist with a most contemptuous aspect, and advised him to avoid such comparisons for the future. 'We all know,' said he, 'the importance of a German count;' I suppose your revenue amounts to three hundred rix-dollars; and you have a chateau that looks like the ruins of an English gaol. I will bind myself to lend you a thousand pounds upon a mortgage of your estate, (and a bad bargain I am sure I shall have,) if I do not, in less than two months, find a yeoman of Kent, who spends more in strong ale than the sum total of your yearly income; and were the truth known, I believe that lace on your coat is no better than tinsel, and those fringed ruffles, with fine Holland sleeves, tacked to a shirt of brown canvas, so that, were you to undress yourself before the lady, you would only expose your own poverty and pride." English all over! Money! money! money! And yet, how we scorn trade and industry!

In "Count Fathom," Smollett ridicules the absurd fashion of betting. "The whole mystery of the art was reduced to the simple exercise of tossing up a guinea, and the last of laying wagers, which they indulged to a surprising pitch of ludicrous intemperance. In one corner of the room

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might be heard a pair of lordlings running their grandmothers against each other, that is, betting sums on the longest liver; in another the success of the wager depended upon the sex of the landlady's next child; and one of the waiters happening to drop down in an apoplectic fit, a certain noble peer exclaimed, 'Dead for a thousand pounds.' The challenge was immediately accepted, and when the master of the house sent for a surgeon to attempt the cure, the nobleman who set the price upon the patient's head, insisted upon his being left to the efforts of nature alone, otherwise the wager should be void: nay, when the landlord harped upon the loss he should sustain by the death of a trusty servant, his lordship obviated the objection, by desiring that the fellow might be charged in the bill.

"In short, the rage of gaining seemed to have devoured all their other faculties, and to have equalled the rash enthusiasm of the inhabitants of Malacca in the East Indies, who are so possessed with that pernicious spirit, that they sacrifice to it not only their fortunes, but also their wives and children; and then letting their hair down upon their shoulders, in imitation of the ancient Lacedæmonians when they devoted themselves to death, those wretches unsheathe their daggers, and murder every living creature in their way. In this, however, they differ from the gamesters of our country, who never find their senses until they have lost their fortunes and beggared their families; whereas the Malays never *run a muck*, but in consequence of misery and despair." The anecdote of the "noble peer" is valuable from its being generally told of George the Fourth when betting with Sheridan, and being taken from an actual occurrence related by Horace Walpole.

Human nature is the same in every clime, so is the medical profession in every age. Take from Count Fathom the following brief extract:—

"The other means used to force a trade, such as ordering

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himself to be called out of church, alarming the neighbourhood with knocking at his door in the night, receiving sudden messages in places of resort, and inserting his cures by way of news in the daily papers, had been so injudiciously hackneyed by every desperate sculler in physic that they had lost all their effect on the public, and therefore were excluded from the plan of our adventurer, &c., &c.; but this he considered as a temporary project only, until he *should have acquired interest enough to erect an hospital, lock, or infirmary*, by the voluntary subscription of his friends; a scheme which had succeeded to a miracle with many of the profession, who had raised themselves into notice upon the carcases of the poor.

"Yet even this branch was already overstocked, *insomuch that almost every street was furnished with one of these charitable receptacles*, which, instead of diminishing the taxes for the maintenance of the poor, encouraged the vulgar to be idle and dissolute, by opening an asylum to them and their families from the diseases of poverty and intemperance; for it remains to be proved, that the parish rates are decreased, the bills of mortality lessened, the people more numerous, or the streets less infested with beggars, notwithstanding the immense sums yearly granted by individuals for the relief of the indigent." So much for charity-mongering *then!* How about it *now?* Have we no scheming medical practitioners, no tuft-hunting clerical toadies who advocate soup-kitchens and harelip hospitals, that they may have excuse, *'in urging the claims of their valuable societies,'* for calling on Bishops and pushing their way into the houses of great men?

The work of Smollett's genius, that is unquestionably the greatest, is "Humphry Clinker." It is not only valuable for the living pictures it gives of a society that has fairly gone from us, but also as illustrative of the true magnanimity of its author. It was his last achievement in litera-

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ture; its pages were prepared for the press by Smollett, in that secluded spot, far from his native land, to which he had retired to die; before the critics in London had well commenced their wrangling and jangling, their upstart cleverncsses, and self satisfied stupidities, about it, its writer lay cold and still in his last rest. It makes the heart rise with love to him, to think of him, the disappointed, neglected, abused man, worn by poverty and disease, painting touch by touch family scenes of the most exquisite tenderness, and calling up his latest and best powers to celebrate the beauties of his birth-place, and the virtues of his native land. The closing scene of Smollett's drama was scarce less grand than Fielding's.

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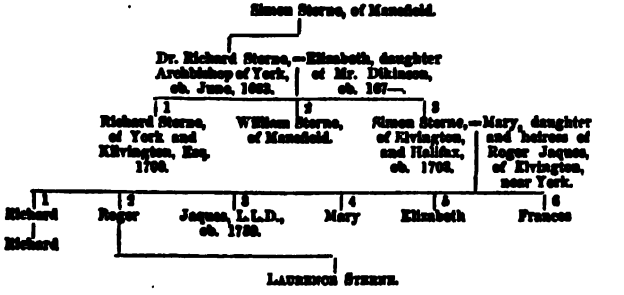
CHAPTER IX.

LAURENCE STERNE.

The Sterne family was originally of Suffolk, from which county a member of it migrated to Nottinghamshire. It became respectable by giving birth to an Archbishop, and illustrious by bestowing on the world the author of "Tristram Shandy." The following is a piece of the Sterne pedigree:—



Roger Sterne was a penniless lieutenant in Handaside's regiment, who incurred a debt to a Mr. Nuttle (a well known suttler in Flanders, during Queen Anne's wars), and being unable to pay that which was due to this gentleman, relieved him of the burden of a step-daughter, and incumbered himself with a portionless wife, who followed her husband's regiment from place to place, regularly presenting him with a new child just at the moment when its advent was most unwished for. The progeny were seven in all, and were of the following names, and came in the fol-

lowing order:—Mary, Laurence, Joram, Anne, Devijeher (named after Colonel Devijeher), Susan, and Catherine. Of these Mary, Laurence, and Catherine, grew to battle with life; the others died young—one on an expedition from Bristol to Hampshire, with the regiment, another in the barracks of Dublin, and a third in military quarters at Carrickfergus. Mary, according to Laurence's history of himself and family, "married one Weemans, in Dublin, who used her most unmercifully, spent his substance, became a bankrupt, and left my poor sister to shift for herself, which she was able to do but for a few months, for she went to a friend's house in the country, and died of a broken heart. *She was a most beautiful woman, of a fine figure, and deserved a better fate.*" (Query. What did her brother do to render her lot brighter?) Catherine, the other sister, survived Sterne, but he did not trouble himself with keeping up an acquaintance with her. He mentioned her in his last days "as most unhappily estranged from me by my uncle's wickedness and her folly." Laurence, doubtless, was afflicted thereat.

Lieutenant Roger was a simple-hearted little man, but very irascible. At Gibraltar he had a quarrel with a brother officer about a goose; a duel was the consequence, and Roger was run through the body. With much difficulty he survived the wound, though with an injured constitution, and went to Jamaica, where he died of a fever, in March, 1731. Laurence was born at Clonmel, Nov. 24, 1713; so he was about eighteen years of age when he heard of his father's death. The boy had by this time been several years at school, under the tuition of a good master, and in the year 1733 his uncle, Dr. Sterne (Prebendary of Durham and holder of two valuable livings in the East Riding of Yorkshire), sent him to Cambridge, in which university he was a member of Jesus College, took his degree of B.A. in 1736, and his M.A. in the commencement of 1740.

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At college he commenced an acquaintance (which became a warm friendship, and lasted throughout life), with his cousin John Hall Stevenson, a gentleman of fortune, considerable wit and scholarship, and a Shandean tendency to voluptuous excess, whose residence was Skelton Castle, in Yorkshire (or Crasy Castle as he christened it), from which he sent forth the "Crasy Tales," which, though now forgotten, attracted in their day much attention. They are as indecent as one would expect from a lover of Sterne, and abound with personality, as the following specimen will show.

My compliments to Dr. S—,
To whom this postcript I address,
Physician, Critic, and Reformer,
Expounder both of dream and riddle,
Historian and chief performer
Upon the Caledonian fiddle!
Master of dedication sweet,
Renowned translator of translations,
That, like old clothes in Monmouth-street,
Display their glittering temptations.
You are so us'd to a Northern trammel,
You cannot enter into Lyric fable;
One might as well expect to see a camel
Pass through a needle's eye, into a stable;
And therefore I am forced to study
To find out something you can understand,
Pleasant and fresh, though somewhat muddy,
Just like the mug of porter in your hand.
And yet when all is said and done,
This something's nothing but a pun.

A PUN.

You are so very good at smelling
For we have often heard you tell it,
I wonder you don't change your spelling,
And write yourself Professor Smellit.

The author of the above lines (unquestionably a man of some merit), is better at no time than when alluding to his

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own deserts. In his "Essay upon the King's Friends, with an account of some discoveries made in Italy, and found in Virgil, concerning the Tories. To Dr. Samuel Johnson," he says, "to say the truth, it has often come into my head, that there is a great resemblance between the French and English Gascon, Montaigne and myself."

When Sterne left the university he went to York, and his uncle got for him the living of Sutton, a modest preferment on which he lived during the worthiest and happiest portion of his life. He now fell in love with a Miss Lumley, of a good Staffordshire family, and possessed of a small fortune, and made his offer to her. He was not rejected, but neither was he accepted. The lady went from Sterne's neighbourhood to live with her sister; but he had permission to write to her frequently. When she returned from her visit, she was in very ill health, death from consumption seeming to impend. One evening while she was in this state and Sterne was sitting with her, she said, "My dear Laurey, I can never be yours, for I verily believe I have not long to live: but I have left you every shilling of my fortune." She however recovered, and Sterne married her in the year 1741. Of this lady, it would be difficult to speak in too high terms. She was a gentle and high-minded woman, of unusual accomplishments, possessing a fine voice and a correct taste in music.

By his good uncle's interest, Sterne became a Prebendary of York, and his wife's family obtained for him the small living of Stillington, which he held together with Sutton, at which latter place he resided for twenty years, a light-hearted, harum-scarum parson, finding his way into society in all quarters of the county, talking and laughing, often (indeed most generally) with little decorum, drinking deep with the squires, flirting away at county balls, quarrelling with the greater number of his black clothed brethren, reading, painting, fiddling, and shooting. Of his powers as

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a limner (which certainly were not mean) a few specimens (three if we remember rightly), may be seen in Wodhul's poems, 8vo. 1772.

In 1747 he published a charity sermon, and in 1750 an assize sermon. The flattering reception these met with in all probability encouraged him to exert himself with his pen. At Skelton Castle, where he spent much of his time and health, lipping Burgundy and singing unchaste songs with his familiar, Hall Stevenson, the Eugenius of Tristram Shandy, he read by fits and starts, and became possessed of a smattering of quaint lore from a collection of old French authors who formed a principal portion of the Crazy Castle Library. From this source, and unscrupulous pilferings from "Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy," he decked himself out in the costume of Harlequin Pedant, and by the force of considerable genius and audacious charlatanry tricked the uneducated portion of the reading public into a belief that he was a man of erudition.

In 1759, when about forty-six years old, he presented to the world, through a York printing-press, Vols. 1 and 2 of "Tristram Shandy." In 1760 Lord Falconbridge presented him with the curacy of Coxwould, "a sweet retirement in comparison with Sutton;" and in the same year, he took a house at York for his wife and daughter, and went up to London to publish the second edition of the two first volumes of his "Tristram." It was an eventful year to him, and the consequences of it were great. On arriving in London he was immediately received into the highest circles, and was flattered and petted by all the most vicious nobles of the kingdom. He was no longer Laurey Sterne, the racketing, careless, blithe-hearted parson of Yorkshire; but the delightful Yorick, the acknowledged master of sentiment, the sweetest popular preacher, the hero of a hundred love affairs (his wife was at York), the adroit teller of nasty stories. He became what Tom Moore and Theodore

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Hook were to the last generation; that to which we now have no parallel in our own days, for though we doubtless have imitators of Hook, yet they are sorry fellows, not even sham heroes, and held as contemptible even by fast young ladies. Sterne became the buffoon of the *beau monde*. Dukes asked Yorick to their dinner parties, because it came to be understood that a Duke's dinner party was not complete without the jester Yorick to make the guests laugh. And laugh they did, at the filthiest jokes and obscenest anecdotes that ever poured from a profligate's lips. And to the vitiated audience the very essence of the fun lay in the fact that it was a clergyman, a man who was publishing sermons, and from the pulpit crying up pure morality, who rattled on in that wild strain. The man himself was intoxicated with triumph, and thought himself cock-sure of a mitre. His personal appearance contributed not a little to his popularity, as is invariably the case with fashionable preachers. In figure he was tall and slight, and his pale, haggard face, in many respects bearing a strong resemblance to Voltaire's, (its features were by no means handsome) was powerfully expressive of satiric humour and shrewdness.

His works came out thus:—

1759. Vols. 1 and 2 of Tristram Shandy.
1760. Vols. 1 and 2 of Sermons.
1761. Vols. 3 and 4 of Tristram Shandy.
1762. Vols. 5 and 6 of Tristram Shandy.
1765. Vols. 7 and 8 of Tristram Shandy.
1766. Vols. 3, 4, 5, and 6 of Sermons.
1767. Vol. 9 of Tristram Shandy.
1768. The Sentimental Journey.

Tristram Shandy and Sermons! Sermons and Tristram Shandy!

"'Tristram Shandy' is still a great object of admiration, the man as well as the book; one is invited to dinner, when

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he dines, a fortnight before. As to the volumes yet published, there is much good fun in them, and humour sometimes hit and sometimes missed. Have you read his "Sermons," with his own comic figure, from a painting by Reynolds, at the head of them? They are in the style I think most proper for the pulpit, and show a strong imagination and sensible heart; *but you see him often tottering on the verge of laughter, and ready to throw his periwig in the face of the audience.*" Gray wrote this, June 22, 1760—*i. e.*, during Yorick's *first season.*

Whatever good Sterne had in his composition, he quickly lost it upon entering the fashionable life of the metropolis. All his manliness left him, and he became the vain, wicked, sensual old dandy, and as little else as it was possible for a man of his talents and *sentimental* profession to be. "He degenerated in London," says David Garrick, "like an ill-transplanted shrub; the incense of the great spoiled his head, and their ragouts his stomach. He grew sickly and proud, an invalid in body and mind."

In Boswell we read, "It having been observed that there was little hospitality in London: Johnson, 'Nay, Sir, any man who has a name, or who has the power of pleasing, will be very generally invited in London. *The man Sterne*, I have been told, has had engagements for three months.' Goldsmith, 'And a very dull fellow.' Johnson, 'Why, no, Sir.'"

No, Goldy, he was just the reverse of a dull fellow, heartless, shallow, vain as yourself, careless of truth, if you like; but he was as brilliant as burnished steel, and sparkled like a diamond. The worst of his occupation was that his wit was too good for the purpose it was put to. Young said,

"Fools are ever on the laughing side;"

and the people Sterne was taken about London to amuse

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would have been quite as well pleased with half as good a feast. Still he at times met with a good rebuff. Soon after Tristram Shandy had appeared, Sterne asked a Yorkshire lady of fortune and condition, whether she had read his book. "I have not, Mr. Sterne," was the answer; "and to be plain with you, I am informed it is not proper for female perusal." But the witty fellow, quite unabashed, replied, pointing to a child of three years old, who was rolling on the carpet, "My dear good lady, do not be gulled by such stories; the book's like your young heir there, he shows at times a good deal that is usually concealed, but it is all in perfect innocence."

Sterne's letters after his arrival at celebrity, are amongst the most interesting in our literature. They are replete with the gossip of the day, and give a picture, beyond one touch of improvement, of his own tastes and ambition. They are so interesting, that we shall read portions of them, a plan of proceeding that assuredly cannot be thought tedious.

To S—— C—— Esq.

May, 1760.

Dear Sir,

* * * * On Monday we set out with a grand retinue of Lord Rockingham's (in whose suite I move) for Windsor; they have contracted for fourteen hundred pounds for the dinner, to some general undertaker, of which the K. has bargained to pay one third. Lord George Sackville was last Saturday at the opera, some say with great effrontery, others, with great dejection.

I have little news to add. There is a shilling pamphlet wrote against Tristram. I wish they would write a hundred such.

To S—— C—— Esq.

London, Christmas Day, 1760.

Dear Friend,

* * * * 'Tis feared the war is quite over in Germany. Never was known such havoc amongst troops. I was told yesterday by a colonel from Germany, that out of two battalions of nine hundred men, to which he belonged, but seventy-one are left! Prince Ferdinand cant

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word, 'tis said, that he must have forty thousand men directly to take the field, and with provisions for them too; for he can but subsist them for a fortnight.

This reads like a note from the Crimea.

Again:—

April 1761.

My dear Sir,

* * * * * You must know that the numbers of officers who have left their regiments in Germany, for the pleasures of the town, have been long a topic for merriment; as you see them in St. James's coffee-house, and the Park, every hour, enquiring, open mouth, how things go on in Germany, and what news, when they should have been there to have furnished news themselves;—but the worst part has been, that many of them have left their brother officers on their duty, and in all the fatigues of it, and have come with no end but to make friends, to be put unfairly over the heads of those who were left risking their lives. In this attempt there have been some but too successful, which has justly raised ill-blood and complaints from the officers who staid behind;—the upshot has been, that they have every soul been ordered off; and woe be to him ('tis said) who shall be found listening. * * * *

* * * * You made me and my friends here very merry, with the accounts current at York, of my being forbid the court; but they do not consider what a considerable person they make of me, when they suppose either my going, or my not going there, is a point that ever enters the King's head; and for those about him, I have the honour to stand so personally well known to them, or to be so represented by those of the first rank, as to fear no accident of that kind.

I thank God (B——'s excepted), I have never yet made a friend or connection I have forfeited, or done ought to forfeit; but on the contrary, my true character is better understood; and where I had one friend last year to do me honour, I have three now. If my enemies knew that by this rage of abuse and ill-will they were effectually serving the interests both of myself and my works, they would be more quiet; but it has been the fate of my betters: who have found, that the way to fame is like the way to heaven, through much tribulation; and till I shall have the honour to be as much mal-treated as Rabelais and Swift were, I must continue humble; for I have not filled the measure of half their persecution.

It was well for Sterne to adopt this tone in speaking of the severe reproval passed on the indecencies of his writings, and the immorality and levity of his life; but really he could not

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have regarded the comments made on his character by the highest authorities as either contemptible in regard to their justice, or as otherwise than prejudicial to his worldly interests.*

To John Hall Stevenson.

Coxwould (about August), 1761.

Dear H * * *

'Tis as cold and churlish just now, as (if God had not pleased it to be so) it ought to have been in bleak December, and therefore I am glad you are where you are, and where (I repeat it again) I wish I was also. Curse of poverty, and absence from those we love; they are two great evils which embitter all things; and yet with the first I am not haunted much. As to matrimony, I should be a beast to rail at it, *for my wife is easy*, but the world is not; and, had I staid from her a second longer, it would have been a burning shame, else she declares herself happier without me; but not in anger is this declaration made, but in pure, sober good sense, built on sound experience. * * *

In 1762 Sterne went on the continent. At Paris, and indeed everywhere, his reception was most flattering.

To David Garrick, Esq.

Paris, Jan. 31, 1762.

Dear Friend,

Tristram was almost as much known here as in London, at least among your men of condition and learning; and has got me introduced into so many circles ('tis *comme à Londres*). I have just now a fortnight's dinners and suppers upon my hands. My application to the Count de Choiseul goes on swimmingly; for not only M. Pelletiere (who, by the bye, sends ten thousand civilities to you and Mrs. Garrick), has undertaken my affair, but the Count de Limbourgh. The Baron d'Holbach has offered any security for the inoffensiveness of my behaviour in France; 'tis more, you rogue, than you will do! This Baron is one of the most learned noblemen here, the protector of wits, and the scavans who are no wits; keeps open house three days a week. His house is now, as yours was to me, my own; he lives at great expense. 'Twas an odd incident which introduced me to the Count de Blasie, which I was at his desire. I found him reading Tristram. This grandee does me

* Hurd writing to Warburton, Bishop of Gloucester, Dec. 27, 1761, says, "Sterne has published his fifth and sixth volumes of Tristram. They are wrote pretty much like the first and second, but whether they will restore his reputation as a writer with the public, is another question. The fellow himself is an irrecoverable scoundrel." From this it is clear that Sir W. Scott, dating the publication of the fifth and sixth volumes of Tristram, 1762, gives a time too late by a few days.

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great honours, and gives me leave to go a private way through his apartments into the Palais Royal, to view the Duke of Orleans' collections, every day I have time. I have been at the doctors of Sorbonne. I hope in a fortnight to break through, or rather from, the delights of this place, which, in the *speculo vitæ*, exceeds all the places I believe in this section of the globe.

I am going, when this letter is wrote, with Mr. Fox and Mr. Macartney to Versailles.

His health was, at this time, in a very precarious state, and so it continued till his death. Pulmonary disease, aggravated if not produced by dissipated living, caused him continued suffering. But he was resolved, now he had emerged from obscurity into the splendours of fashion, not to give in. One day he bursts a blood-vessel and is brought down to death's door, a week afterwards he is dashing about, the gayest of the gay, from one scene of festivity to another. Serious reflections he attempted to drive away with laughter; but the Shandean philosophy did not always succeed, and he, at times, would sit for long hours together in deep dejection.

To David Garrick, Esq.

Paris, March 19, 1762.

Dear Garrick,

. . . . but I neither worship nor fall (much) upon my knees before them, but, on the contrary, have converted many unto Shandeism; for be it known I shandy it away fifty times more than I was ever wont, talk more nonsense than ever you heard me talk in your days, and to all sorts of people. "*Qui le diable est cet homme là*," said Choiseul, t'other day, "*ce Chevalier Shandy?*" You'll think me as vain as a devil was I to tell you the rest of the dialogue; whether the bearer knows it or no I know not . . . .

To David Garrick, Esq.

Paris, April 10, 1762.

My dear Garrick,

. . . . Crebillon (fils) has made a convention with me, which, if he is not too lazy, will be no bad *persiflage*; as soon as I get to Toulouse he has agreed to write to me an expostulatory letter on the indecencies of "T. Shandy," which is to be answered by a recrimination upon

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the liberties in his own works. These are to be printed together. Crebillon against Sterne—Sterne against Crebillon; the copy to be sold, and the money equally divided.

In the summer, Sterne sent over for his wife and daughter to join him in Paris. Lydia, his only child, was to complete her education and be introduced into society. His letters to them are affectionate enough, and abound with directions for them to follow, so as to secure their comfort on the road. He is dying to see them, they shall be as happy as the days are long, &c., &c. He has bought a very pretty carriage for his darlings. Mrs. Sterne was in a very delicate state of health, and her husband's neglect of her was a source of continual grief.

To Mrs. Sterne, York.

Paris, June 7, 1762.

My dear,

I keep my promise, and write to you again. I am sorry the bureau must be opened for the deeds; but you will see it done. I imagine you are convinced of the necessity of bringing three hundred pounds in your pocket. If you consider, Lydia must have two slight negligées; you will want a new gown or two. As for painted linens, buy them in town; they will be more admired, because English, than French. Mrs H—— writes me word that I am mistaken about buying silks cheaper at Toulouse than Paris; that she advises you to buy what you want here, where they are very beautiful and cheap, as well as blonds, gauzes, &c. These, I say, will all cost you sixty guineas, and you must have them, for in this country nothing must be spared for the back; and if you dine on an onion, and lie in a garret seven stories high, you must not betray it in your clothes, according to which you are well or ill looked on. When we are got to Toulouse, we must begin to turn the penny, and we may (if you do not game much) live very cheap. * * * *

In due time, and safely, his wife and only child reached him.

To John Hall Stevenson, Esq.

Toulouse, August 12, 1762.

My dear H.,

. . . . . About a week or ten days before my wife arrived at Paris, I had the same accident I had at Cambridge, of breaking a vessel in

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my lungs. It happened in the night, and I bled the bed full; and finding in the morning I was likely to bleed to death, I sent immediately for a surgeon to bleed me at both arms; this saved me; and, with lying speechless for three days, I recovered upon my back in bed; the breach healed, and, in a week after, I got out. This, with my weakness and hurrying about, made me think it high time to haste to Toulouse.

To Mr. Foley, at Paris.

Toulouse, August 14, 1762.

My dear Foley,

. . . . . Well! here we are after all, my dear friend, and most deliciously placed at the extremity of the town, in an excellent house, well furnished and elegant beyond anything I look'd for. 'Tis built in the form of a hotel, with a pretty court towards the town; and behind, the best garden in Toulouse, laid out in serpentine walks; and so large, that the company in our quarter usually come to walk there in the evenings, for which they have my consent; "the more the merrier." The house consists of a good *salle à manger* above stairs, joining to the very great salle à compagnie as large as the Baron d'Holbach's; three handsome bed-chambers with dressing rooms to them; below stairs, two very good rooms for myself; one to study in, the other to see company. I have moreover cellars round the court, and all other offices. Of the same landlord I have bargained to have the use of a country-house, which he has two miles out of town; so that myself and all my family have nothing more to do than to take our hats and remove from the one to the other. My landlord is moreover to keep the gardens in order; and what do you think I am to pay for all this? Neither more nor less than thirty pounds a year!

But his letters soon display that he is restless and wants to move.

When I have reaped the benefit of this winter at Toulouse, I cannot see I have anything more to do with it; therefore, after having gone with my wife and girl to Bagnières, I shall return from whence I came. Now my wife wants to stay another year, to save money; and this opposition of wishes, though 'twill not be as sour as lemon, yet 'twill not be as sweet as sugar candy. I wish T—— would lead Sir Charles to Toulouse; 'tis as good as any town in the South of France. For my own part, 'tis not to my taste; *but I believe the groundwork of my aversion is more to the eternal platitude of the French characters; little variety, no originality in it at all, than to any other cause;* for they are very civil; but civility itself in that uniform, wearies and bothers one to death."

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How poor Mrs. Sterne fared at this time, in the society of her sentimental husband, may be gathered from the following extract from a letter written by M. Tollot to John Hall Stevenson.

Bourdeaux, 6 Janvier, 1764.

. . . . Nous arrivâmes le lendemain à Montpellier ou nous trouvâmes notre ami Mr. Sterne, sa femme, sa fille, Mr. Hust et quelques autres Anglaises, j'eu je vous l'avoue beaucoup de plaisir, en revoiant le bon et agréable Tristram, qui me parut être toujours à peu pres dans le meme état où je l'avois laissé à Paris, il avoit été assez longtemps à Toulouse ou il se seroit amusé sans sa femme qui le poursuivoit partout, et qui vouloit être de tout, *ces dispositions dans cette bonne dame lui ont fait passer d'assez mauvais momens, il supporte tous ces desagremens avec une patience d'ange*; son intention étoit retourner en Angleterre avec sa famille, mais il paroit, que ces deux dames veulent passer encore un an en France pour finir Miss Sterne, pour lui il est déterminé à quitter Montpellier dans le mois de Février et de venir á Paris, je l'ai beaucoup exhorté à venir nous y joindre j'aurai soin d'avoir une bonne chambre pour lui dans le meme hotel où il aura toujours son couvert, et s'il veut nous le ramenerons en Angleterre avec nous. . . .

Leaving his wife and Lydia in France, Yorick returned to England, "to go and visit his wife, the church in Yorkshire." And at, or about this time, *the angel* made himself so conspicuous at York with a lady who visited that city on her way to Scarborough, that scandal was very busy, and some ladies asked Sterne who his fair friend was. "Do not tell, ladies; 'tis a mistress my wife has recommended to me,—nay, moreover, has sent me from France," was his reply.

To David Garrick, Esq.

London, March 16, 1765.

Dear Garrick,

I threatened you with a letter in one I wrote a few weeks ago to Foley; but (to my shame be it spoken) I lead such a life of dissipation I have never had a moment to myself which has not been broke in upon by one engagement or impertinence or another; and as plots thicken towards the latter end of the piece, I find, unless I take pen and ink just now, I shall not be able to do it till either I am got into the country or you into the city. . . . .

. . . . I have had a most lucrative campaign here. Shandy sells well.

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I am taxing the public with two more volumes of Sermons, which will more than double the gains of Shandy. It goes into the world with a prancing list de toute la noblesse: which will bring me in three hundred pounds, exclusive of the sale of the copy. . . . .

To Mr. Foley.

Bath, April, 15, 1765.

My Dear Foley, ...

. . . . I have made a good campaign of it this year in the field of the *literati*:—my two volumes of Tristram, and two of Sermons, which I shall print very soon, will bring a considerable sum. *Almost all the nobility in England honour me with their names, and 'tis thought it will be the largest and most splendid list which ever pranced before a book, since subscriptions came into fashion. Pray present my most sincere compliments to Lady H——, whose name I hope to insert with many others. As so many men of genius favour me with their names also, I will quarrel with Mr Hume, and call him Deist, and what not, unless I have his name too. My love to Lord W——. Your name, Foley, I have put in as a free-will offering of my labours. Your list of subscribers you will send;—'tis but a crown for sixteen sermons. Dog cheap!*

Think of a literary man in our time thus touting for guineas!

The following is a note-worthy epistle.

To Mr. W——,

Coxwould, May 23, 1765.

. . . . I am glad that you are in love;—'twill cure you, at least of the spleen, which has a bad effect on both man and woman. I myself must have some Dulcinea in my head; it harmonizes the soul;—and in those cases, I first endeavour to make the lady believe so, or rather, I begin first to make myself believe that I am in love; but I carry on my affairs quite in the French way, sentimentally. *L'amour* (say they) *n'est rien sans sentiment.*

Towards the close of 1765, he started for his Italian tour, throughout which he was attended by La Fleur.

To John Hall Stevenson, Esq.

Naples, Feb. 5, 1766.

My dear H—

. . . . We have jolly carnival of it; nothing but operas, punchinellos, festinos, and masquerades. We (that is *nous autres*) are all dressing out for one this night at the Princess Francavivalla's, which is to be superb. The English dine with her (exclusive) . . . .

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To the same.

May 25, near Dijon (1766).

Dear Anthony,

My desire of seeing both my wife and girl has turned me out of my oad towards a delicious château of the Countess of M——, where I have een patriarching it these seven days with her ladyship and half-a-dozen f very handsome and agreeable ladies. *Her ladyship has the best of earts; a valuable present not given to everyone* . . . . Never man has een such a wild goose chase after a wife as I have been. After having ought her in five or six towns, I found her at last in Franche Compté. 'oor woman, she was very cordial, &c., and begs to stay here another year r so. My Lydia pleases me much. (I found her greatly improved in verything I wished her . . . .

Again quitting his wife and child, Sterne went to England, isited his livings, showed himself at York, and with the ommencement of 1767 was again in London, immersed in ociety, making love to twenty ladies at the same time, ntriguing, jesting, and *lying*. His poor foolish wife, who ould persist in loving him, heard a story of her angel that ave her a fresh though not an untried wound.

To Miss Sterne.

February 28, 1767.

. . . . . I do not wish to know who was the busy fool, who made our mother uneasy about Mrs. —— ; 'tis true, I have a friendship for er, but not to infatuation. I believe I have judgment enough to discern hers, and every woman's faults. I honour thy mother for her nswer—That she wished not to be informed, and begged him to drop he subject.

The worn-out, jaded old debauchee now fell violently in ove with "Mrs. Elizabeth Draper, the wife of Daniel Draper, Esq., counsellor at Bombay, and then chief of the actory of Surat, a gentleman very much respected in that uarter of the globe." The lady was sent from India to ngland for her health, when Yorick happening to fall in ith her, "he immediately discovered in her a mind so conenial with his own, so enlightened, so refined, and so tender, hat their mutual attraction presently joined them in the

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closest union that purity would possibly admit of; he loved her as his friend, and prided in her as his pupil; all her concerns became presently his; her health, her circumstances, her reputation, her children were his; his fortune, his time, his country, were at her disposal, so far as the sacrifice of all or any of these might contribute to her real happiness."

And to this Mrs. Elizabeth Draper, another man's wife, whom, for the sake of euphony he called Eliza, did Sterne write in the following style: —

I got thy letter last night, Eliza, on my return from Lord Bathurst's, where I dined,* and where I was heard (as I talked of thee an hour without intermission) with so much pleasure and attention, that the good old Lord toasted your health three different times; and now he is in his eighty-fifth year, says he hopes to live long enough to be introduced as a friend to my fair disciple, and to see her eclipse all other nabobesses as much in wealth as she does already in exterior, and (what is far better) in interior merit. I hope so too. This nobleman is an old friend of mine. You know he was always the protector of men of wit and genius; and has had those of the last century, Addison, Steele, Pope, Swift, Prior, &c. &c.

* At dinner parties Sterne sometimes amused his employers with *sentimental talk*, but more usually with a flood of jargon and nonsense, full of scandal, absurd allusions, narratives of *facts* fresh from his brain, and abounding with personalities to those present whom he deemed it safe to make butts of. The following anecdote (the truth of which Sterne, though challenged, did not deny), taken from the "Royal French Magazine," for April, 1760, will illustrate this:—"At the last dinner that the late lost amiable Charles Stanhope gave to genius, Yorick was present. The good old man was vexed to see a pedantic medicine-monger take the lead, and prevent that pleasantry which good wit and good wine might have occasioned, by a discourse in the unintelligible language of his profession, concerning the difference between phrenitis and paraphrenitis, and the concomitant categories of the mediastinum and pleura.

"Good-humoured Yorick saw the sense of the master of the feast, and fell into the cant and jargon of physic as if he had been one of Radcliffe's travellers. 'The vulgar practice,' says he, 'savours too much of the mechanical principles; the venerable ancients were all empirics, and the profession will never regain its ancient credit till practice falls into the old track again. I am myself an instance; I caught cold by leaning on a damp cushion, and, after sneezing and snivelling for a fortnight, it fell on my breast. They bleeded me, blistered me, and gave me robs, and bobs, and lohocks, and octagmains: but I grew worse, for I was treated according to the exact rules of the college. In short, from an inflammation it came to an *adhesion*, and all was over with me. They advised me to go to Bristol, that I might not do them the scandal of dying under their hands; and the Bristol people, for the same reason, consigned me over to Lisbon. But what do I? Why I considered an adhesion is, in plain English, only a sticking of two things together, and that force enough would pull them asunder. I bought a good oak pole, and began leaping over all the walls and ditches in the country. From the height of the pole I used to come sense down upon my feet, like an ass when he trampies upon a bull dog, but it did not do. At last, when I had raised myself perpendicularly over a wall, I used to fall exactly across the ridge of it, upon the side opposite to the adhesion; this tore it off at once, and I am as you see. Come, fill a glass to the memory of the empiric medicine.' If he had been asked elsewhere about this disorder (for he really had a consumptive disorder)

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always at his table. The manner in which his notice began of me, was as singular as it was polite. He came up to me, one day, as I was at the Princess of Wales's court. "I want to know you, Mr. Sterne, but it is fit you should know, also, who it is that wishes this pleasure. You have heard (continued he) of an old Lord Bathurst, of whom your Popes and Swifts have sung and spoken so much. I have lived my life with geniuses of that cast; but have survived them; and despairing ever to find their equals, it is some years since I have closed my accounts, and shut up my books, with thoughts of never opening them again; but you have kindled a desire in me of opening them once more before I die; which I now do: so go home and dine with me."—This nobleman, I say, is a prodigy; for at eighty-five he has all the wit and promptness of a man of thirty, a disposition to be pleased and a power to please others beyond whatever I knew; added to which, a man of learning, courtesy, and feeling.

He heard me talk of thee, Eliza, with uncommon satisfaction; for there was only a third person, and of sensibility, with us; and a most sentimental afternoon, till nine o'clock, have we passed! But thou, Eliza, wert the star that conducted and enlivened the discourse; and when I talked not of thee, still did'st thou fill my mind, and warmed every thought I uttered; for I am not ashamed to acknowledge I greatly miss thee. Best of all good girls! the sufferings I have sustained the whole

he would have answered that he was cured by Huxham's decoction of the bark, and elixir of vitriol."

As another instance of Sterne's society demeanour, take the following story from "Memoires d'un Voyageur," by *Mr.* Dutens, who met Sterne at a dinner-party at Paris:—"Nous étions au temps de l'anniversaire de la naissance du Roi d'Angleterre; Milord Tavistock invita, ce jour-là, le peu d'Anglois qui étoient à Paris, à dîner avec lui pour le celebrer. Je fus de la partie, ou je ne trouvais de ma connaissance que ceux avec qui j'étois venu à Paris. Je fus assis entre Milord Berkeley, qui alloit à Turin, et le fameux Sterne, auteur de 'Tristram Shandy,' regardé comme le Rabelais de l'Angleterre. On fut fort gai pendant le dîner, et l'on but à l'Anglois, et selon le jour. La conversation vint à tomber sur Turin, où plusieurs de la compagnie alloient; sur quoi M. Sterne m'addressant la parole, me demanda si j'y connoissois M. D— en me nommant. Toute la compagnie se prit à rire; et Sterne, qui ne me croyait pas si près de lui, s'imagina que ce M. D— devoit être un homme assez bizarre, puisque son nom seul faisoit rire ceux qui l'entendoient. N'est ce pas un homme singulier? ajouta-t-il tout de suite. Oui, repris je, un original. Je m'en étois bien douté, continua t'il; j'ai entendu parler de lui; et là dessus il se mit à faire mon portrait, auquel je fis mine d'acquiescer, et voyant que le sujet réjouissoit la compagnie, il se mit à inventer, dans la fertilité de son esprit, plusieurs contes à sa façon, qu'il fit durer, au grand plaisir de tous, jusqu, à ce que l'heure vint de se separer. Je sortis le premier; et à peine fus je hors de la maison, qu'on lui dit qui j'étois; on lui donna à entendre que, par respect pour Milord Tavistock, je m'étois contenu; mais que je n'étois pas traitable, et qu'il pouvoit s'attendre à me voir, le lendemain, lui demander raison des méchans propos qu'on lui persuada qu'il avoit tenu de moi. Il crut, en effet, qu'il avoit poussé la raillerie trop loin; car il étoit un peu gai; il vint le jour suivant me trouver, et me demander pardon de ce qu'il pouvoit avoir dit qui m'eut deplu, s'excusant sur le circonstance, et sur la demangeaison qu'il avoit eue d'amuser un peu la compagnie, qu'il y avoit vue si bien disposée, des qu'il avoit prononcé mon nom; mais je l'arretai tout court, en l'assurant que je m'étois amusé de son erreur autant qu'un autre; qu'il n'avoit rien dit qui pût m'offenser; et que, s'il connoissait l'homme dont il avoit parlé, aussi bien que je le faisois il en auroit pu dire beaucoup plus de mal. Il fut enchanté de ma réponse, m'embrassa, me demanda mon amitié et me quitta fort satisfait de moi.

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night on thy account, Eliza, are beyond my power of words. Assuredly does Heaven give strength proportioned to the weight he lays upon us! Thou hast been bowed down, my child, with every burden that sorrow of heart, and pain of body, could inflict on a poor being; and still thou tellest me, thou art beginning to get ease; thy fever gone, thy sickness, the pain in thy side vanishing also. May every evil so vanish that thwarts Eliza's happiness, or but awakens thy fears for a moment! Fear nothing, my dear! Hope every thing; and the balm of this passion will shed its influence on thy wealth, and make thee enjoy a spring of youth and cheerfulness, more than thou hast hardly yet tasted!

And so thou hast fixed thy Brahmin's portrait over thy writing desk, and wilt consult it in all doubts and difficulties. Grateful and good girl! Yorick smiles contentedly over all thou dost; his picture does not do justice to his own complacency!

Thy sweet little plan and distribution of thy time, how worthy of thee! Indeed, Eliza, thou leavest me nothing to direct thee in! thou leavest me nothing to require, nothing to ask, but a continuation of that conduct which won my esteem, and has made me thy friend for ever!

May the roses come quick back to thy cheeks, and the rubies to thy lips! But trust my declaration, Eliza, that thy husband (if he is the good, feeling man I wish him) will press thee to his with more honest warmth and affection, and kiss thy pale, poor, dejected face with more transport than he would be able to do in the best bloom of all thy beauty: and so he ought, or I pity him. He must have strange feelings if he knows not the value of such a creature as thou art! . . .

All his letters to Elizabeth Draper are in the same strain.

"I have been with Zumpe; and your pianoforte must be tuned from the brass middle string of your guitar, which is C. I have got a hammer too, and a pair of pliers to twist your wire with; and may every one of them, my dear, vibrate sweet comfort to my hopes; I have bought you ten handsome brass screws to hang your necessaries upon: I purchased twelve; but stole a couple from you to put up in my own cabin, at Canwould. *I shall never hang, or take my hat off one of them, but I shall think of you.* I have bought three, moreover, a couple of iron screws, which are more to be depended on than brass, for the globes."

In another letter:—

"I fear the best of your shipmates are only genteel by comparison with the contracted crew with which thou must behold them. So was—, you know who!—from the same fallacy which was put upon the judgment, when—but I will not mortify you. If they are decent, and distant, it is enough; and as much as is to be expected."

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In another epistle—

"Talking of widows:—pray, Eliza, if ever you are such, do not think of giving yourself to some wealthy nabob, because I design to marry you myself. My wife cannot live long; and I know not the woman I should like so well for her substitute as yourself. 'Tis true, I am ninety-five in constitution, and you but twenty-five; rather too great a disparity this! but what I want in youth, I will make up in wit and good-humour. Not Swift so loved his Stella, Scarron his Maintenon, or Waller his Sacharissa, as I will love and sing thee, my wife elect!"

The last letter he sends Mrs. Draper before her ship sails, and bears her to—we know who—in India, announced that he had had a fresh bleeding from the lungs.

"My fears were too well founded; for, in ten minutes after I dispatched my letter, this poor, fine spun frame of Yorick's gave way, and I broke a vessel in my breast, and could not stop the loss of blood till four this morning. I have filled all thy India handkerchiefs with it. *It came I think from my heart.*"

In his letters to Eliza, he was fond of making use of scripture quotations; he could act the hypocrite of the prayer book school to perfection.

While Eliza's ship is still within sight of the British shores, the Brahmin, in Mount Coffee-house, writes to Lady P——, begging permission to visit her.

"It is but an hour ago, I kneeled down and swore I never would come near you; and after saying my Lord's Prayer for the sake of the close, *& not being led into temptation*, out I sallied like any Christian hero. . . . "

But the Christian hero falls, and craves an invitation to her ladyship's privacy.

What was Mrs. Draper doing meanwhile? Was she weeping in the solitude of her cabin? or casting her eyes about, and making overtures of flirtation to some of her fellow passengers, genteel only by contrast?

Before bidding Mrs. Draper farewell, one more anecdote

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must be given. Some prudent friends urged her to break off her acquaintance with Sterne, who, on being informed of the circumstance, implored her to withdraw herself from their society, and on her quitting England, wrote to her his wish that she would not correspond with them, adducing as an argument, why she should obey him, the fact that her intimate friend Mrs. J—— urged her to take that step. This assertion on the part of the Brahmin was altogether false.

In the summer, exhausted by pulmonary disease, and also a loathsome affection (the consequence of vicious pleasures), he retired from London to Coxwould, to nurse his feeble body. On his road, at Newark, he wrote to his friend Stevenson—

"I have got conveyed thus far, like a bale of cadaverous goods, consigned to Pluto and Company, lying in the bottom of my chaise most of the route, upon a large pillow I had the *prévoyance* to purchase before I set out."

In the autumn his wife and child returned from France, and embraced him at Coxwould. On Dec. 8, 1767, he writes to a friend—

"In three weeks I shall kiss your hand; and sooner, if I can finish my Sentimental Journey. The deuce take all sentimentals! I wish there was not one in the world! My wife is come to pay me a sentimental visit as far as from Avignon; and the *politesse* arising from such a proof of her urbanity has robbed me of a month's writing, or I had been in town now."

And at about the same time he writes a dog-Latin letter to his cousin Hall-Stevenson, in which he says:—

"Nescio quid est materia cum me, sed sum fatigatus et segrotus do mea uxore plus quam unquam, et sum posressus cum diabolo qui pellet me in urbem."

By the new year's day (if not sooner), 1768, he is in Bond Street, as witty, as false, as *heartless* as ever, thirsting for the excitement and adulation of another season, and on the look-out for preferment. His friends encouraged him

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to hope for a bishopric. Hall-Stevenson in his 'Crazy Tales' had pointed him out as a fit man for a mitre.

> Why may'st Bandello have a rap?
> Why may'st I imitate Bandello?
> There never was a prelate's cap
> Bestowed upon a droller fellow.
> Like Tristram in mirth delighting;
> Like Tristram a pleasant writer;
> Like his, I hope that Tristram's writing
> Will be rewarded with a mitre.

But the day of Yorick's garish triumphs was soon to close. On the 20th of February, he wrote to his child:—

My dearest Lydia,

My Sentimental Journey, you say, is admired in York by every one, and 'tis no vanity in me to tell you that it is no less admired here: but what is the gratification of my feelings upon this occasion? The want of health bows me down, and vanity harbours not in thy father's breast. This vile influenza! be not alarmed! I think I shall get the better of it; and shall be with you about the first of May; and if I escape, 'twill not be for a long period, my child, unless a quiet retreat and peace of mind can restore me. The subject of thy letter has astonished me. She could but know little of my feelings, to tell thee, that under the supposition I should survive thy mother, I should bequeath thee as a legacy to ——. No my Lydia! 'tis a lady, whose virtues I wish thee to imitate, that I shall entrust my girl to; I mean that friend whom I have so often talked and wrote about. From her you will learn to be an affectionate wife, a tender mother, and a sincere friend: and you cannot be intimate with her, without her pouring some part of the milk of human kindness into your breast, which will serve to check the heat of your own temper, which you partake in a small degree of. Nor will that amiable woman put my Lydia under the painful necessity to fly to India for protection, whilst it is in her power to grant her a more powerful one in England. But I think, my Lydia, that thy mother will survive me. Do not deject her spirits with thy apprehension on my account. I have sent you a necklace, buckles, and the same to your mother. My girl cannot form a wish that is in the power of her father, that he will not gratify her in; and I cannot, in justice, be less kind to thy mother. I am never alone; the kindness of my friends is ever the same. I wish though I had thee to nurse me; but I am denied that. Write to me twice a week, at least. God bless thee, my child! and believe me, ever, thy

Affectionate father,

L. S.

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Hourly he became worse: and when he saw and tried not to see that there was no chance of escape, he wrote the following affecting letter:—

To Mrs. J——.

Tuesday.

Your poor friend is scarce able to write; he has been at death's door this week with a pleurisy. I was bled three times on Thursday, and blistered on Friday. The physician says I am better. God knows, for I feel myself sadly wrong, and shall, if I recover, be a long while of gaining strength. Before I have gone thro' half this letter, I must stop to rest my weak hand above a dozen times. Mr. J—— was so good to call upon me yesterday. I felt emotions not to be described at the sight of him; and he overjoyed me by talking a great deal of you. Do, dear Mrs. J——, entreat him to come to-morrow or next day, for, perhaps, I have not many days or hours to live. I want to ask a favour of him, if I find myself worse,—that I shall beg of you, if in this wrestling I come off conqueror. My spirits are fled;—'tis a bad omen;—do not weep, dear lady, your tears are too precious to shed for me; bottle them up, and may the cork never be drawn! Dearest, kindest, gentlest, and best of women, may health, peace, and happiness, prove your hand-maids! If I die, cherish the remembrance of me, and forget the follies which you so often condemned,—which my heart, not my head, betrayed me into. Should my child, my Lydia, want a mother, may I hope you will (if she is left parentless) take her to your bosom? You are the only woman on earth I can depend upon for such a benevolent action. I wrote to her a fortnight ago, and told her what I trust she will find in you. Mr. J—— will be a father to her;—he will protect her from every insult; for he wears a sword which he has served his country with, and which he would know how to draw out of the scabbard in defence of innocence. Commend me to him, as I now commend you to that Being who takes under his care the good and kind part of the world. Adieu!—All grateful thanks to you and Mr. J——.

Your poor affectionate friend,

L. Sterne.

Ten days after the penning of this letter, so pathetic with despair of life, reluctance to surrender hope of a brief extension of existence, and affection for his child, Sterne expired. He lay on his bed totally exhausted, and complained feebly that his feet were cold, begging his nurse to chafe them. She obeyed and for a few instants he seemed

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to experience relief. The cold rose higher up to his body, he complained;—the woman immediately proceeded to rub his ancles and legs, when he died without a groan. This was on the 18th day of March, 1768.

The vital warmth had not left his body, when his attendants proceeded to plunder, rifling his dressing-case, and stripping him of his gold sleeve-buttons.

On the 22nd of March, he was interred in the burying-ground belonging to St. George's, Hanover Square. The only monument, besides his works, raised in his memory, was erected at the cost of two Brother Masons, who adorned it with the following flippant and vulgar inscription.

NEAR TO THIS PLACE
LIES THE BODY OF
THE REVEREND LAURENCE STERNE, A.M.
DIED SEPTEMBER 18, 1768,
AGED 53 YEARS.

AH! MOLLITER OSSA QUIESCANT!

If a sound head, warm heart, and breast humane,
Unsullied worth, and soul without a stain,
If Mental Powers could ever justly claim
The well won tribute of immortal fame,
Sterne was *the Man*, who, with gigantic stride,
Mow'd down luxuriant Follies far and wide.
Yet what tho' keenest knowledge of Mankind
Unseal'd to him the springs that move the mind,
What did it cost him? Ridicul'd, abus'd,
By fools insulted, and by prudes accus'd!
In his, mild reader, view thy future fate,
Like him, despise what 'twere a sin to hate.

This Monumental Stone was erected by two brother masons; for, although he did not live to be a member of their society, yet, as his all-incomparable performances evidently prove him to have acted by rule and square, they rejoice at this opportunity of perpetuating his high and irreproachable character to after ages. W. & S.

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These gentlemen (Messrs. W. and S.) ought to have taken more care that their own performance was according to rule and square. It is needless to say that the date they assign to Sterne's death is erroneous, but quite as truthful as any part of the verses.

The best possible inscription for the man is one that Byron wrote upon the pitiful career of the sentimental Yorick.

HERE LIE THE REMAINS
OF
LAURENCE STERNE,
WHO PREFERRED
"WHINING OVER A DEAD ASS TO RELIEVING A LIVING MOTHER."

In volume 89, of the "Gentleman's Magazine," there is the following passage. "It is reported that the body of Mr. Sterne, the ingenious author of 'Tristram Shandy,' which was buried at Marybone, has been taken up and anatomized by a surgeon at Oxford. That gentleman, though happy in a fertile genius, does not seem to have been happy through life. He lived, during the early period of his life in obscurity and poverty; and in the latter part in a state of separation from his wife, who chose rather to retire to a convent in France, with her amiable daughter, than live in England under the daily provocations of an unkind husband. For tho' the Rev. Mr. Sterne was a great wit, it cannot be said he was a desirable companion for a woman of delicacy." The newspapers and journals, for some years after Sterne's death, were fruitful in paragraphs such as the above, combining fact with fiction. The question whether Sterne's body was anatomised has caused much discussion—and uselessly. It is enough to know that English society underwent such a revulsion of horror at the death of the brilliant man they had petted and adored, that they were ready to believe, and

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even craved for, any particulars that tended to make his fate appear sad and strangely dreadful.

Sterne's daughter became the wife of a French gentleman; and, as Lydia Sterne de Medalle, she edited her father's letters. Amongst them she published, *at her poor mother's request*, the love-letters Sterne wrote to his wife just previous to marrying her. Though the poor lady did not retain the heart she so much valued, she wished to show posterity that she once possessed it.

To Miss L——.

Yes! I will steal from the world, and not a babbling tongue will tell where I am,—echo shall not so much as whisper my hiding-place:—Suffer thy imagination to paint it as a little sun-gilt cottage, on the side of a romantic hill. Dost thou think I will leave love and friendship behind me? No! they shall be the companions of my solitude, for they will sit down and rise up with me in the amiable form of my L——. We will be as merry and innocent as our first parents in Paradise, before the arch fiend entered that undescribable scene.

The kindest affections will have room to shoot and expand in our retirement, and produce such fruit as madness, and envy, and ambition, have always killed in the bud. Let the human tempest and hurricane rage at a distance; the desolation is beyond the horizon of peace. My L—— has seen the polyanthus blow in December,—some friendly wall has sheltered it from the biting wind. No planetary influence shall reach us, but that which presides over and cherishes the sweetest flowers. God preserve us! how delightful this prospect is in idea! We will build and we will plant in our own way,—simplicity shall not be tortured by art;—we will learn of nature how to live,—she shall be our alchymist, to mingle all the good of life into one salubrious draught. The gloomy family of Care and Distrust shall be banished from our dwelling, guarded by thy kind and tutelar deity;—we will sing our choral songs of gratitude, and rejoice to the end of our pilgrimage.

Adieu, my L——. Return to one who languishes for thy society.

L. Sterne.

The letter about the brass pegs to Eliza, was an improvement on this.

But, cries the reader, you may not confound the artist with his works. Bacon was a good philosopher, and a great

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rogue. Byron was prince of poets, and yet a very bad husband. Enough of Sterne, the man; what of Sterne the author?

"After a wandering life, Democritus settled at Abdera, a town in Thrace, having been sent for thither to be law-maker, recorder, or town clerk as some will; or as others being there bred and born. Howsoever it was, there he lived at last in a garden in the suburbs, wholly betaking himself to his studies and a private life, *seeing that sometimes he would walk down to the haven, and laugh heartily at such a variety of ridiculous objects, which there he saw.*" Such an one was Democritus. Of Democritus Junior, Wood says, 'he was an exact mathematician, a curious calculator of nativities, a general read scholar, a thorough paced philologist, and one that understood the surveying of lands well. As he was by many accounted a severe student, a devourer of authors, a melancholy and humourous person; so by others, who knew him well, a person of great honesty, plain dealing, and charity. I have heard some of the ancients of Christ Church often say, that his company was very merry, facete, and juvenile; and no man in his time did surpass him for his ready and dexterous interlarding his common discourses among them with verses from the poets, or sentences from classic authors, which being then all in fashion in the University, made his company the more acceptable.' He resided chiefly at Oxford; and in his rooms at Christ Church, he died Jan. 1639-40, very nigh the point of time he had foretold some years before, would be his death passage, on which, says Wood, 'several of the students did not forbear to whisper among themselves, that rather than there should be a mistake in the calculation, he sent up his soul to heaven through a slip about his neck.' This Democritus Junior, alias Robert Burton, composed a book, 'with the view of relieving his own melancholy, but increased it to such a degree, *that*

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nothing could make him laugh, but going to the bridge foot and hearing the ribaldry of the bargemen, which rarely failed to throw him into a violent fit of laughter.'

This book Sterne was the unintentional cause of bringing into fashion, and since the day of his exposure "Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy" has been highly favoured with attention. It is from the pages of that marvellous collection of useless knowledge that novelists, who wish to shine as men of classic condition, filch quotations, and political essayists and debaters get pungent lines from rare and almost unknown writers of antiquity with which they round their periods. Often has Democritus junior, in the character of a dashing pamphleteer or brilliant orator, gained vehement applause from the British House of Commons, and reverence and admiration from the ladies. As Sterne was about the first to drink, he was the one to take the longest pull. And not content with plundering the "Anatomy" of some of its choicest treasures, and swaggering before the astonished world an intellectual millionaire, possessed of such uncounted stores of research and scholarship that he was compelled, for the sake of relieving himself, to squander them in folly, he also took possession of the unwise sage who had so enriched him, drew the absurdest possible portrait of him, wrote 'Shandy' above it, and exhibited it to the public on terms advantageous to himself. That the picture was a miserable caricature, exaggerating the absurdities and passing over the beauties of the original, is not to be wondered at. A man must feel before he can describe, must 'be a tree' before he can paint one. And Sterne was too weak by nature, and too unprepared by education, to understand such a character as Burton's. All he knew of the man was that he was an oddity, one altogether unlike any one he had ever met in real life, and he straightway fell into that boisterous laughter which is so very infectious, and yet so far less joyous and vivacious than the smiles of

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humour. Had Sterne been a humourist of the high order that his contemporaries declared him, he would not have made Mr. Shandy a simple-hearted, contemptible old twaddle, but would have drawn him heroic as well as child-like, such as Augustine Caxton. But Sterne, to use Thackeray's words, was a great jester, not a great humourist. To appreciate the humour of Burton requires deep knowledge of human nature, and extensive and solid learning. Sterne had neither. His acquaintance with man and his study of books were alike superficial; into his fellow creatures he could not see an inch till his eyes were dimmed with tears, and his stock of scholastic information was in no respect greater than what a clergyman must have to make a decent figure in the world. When Dr. Ferriar published his 'Illustrations of Sterne,' and showed the sources from which 'Yorick' had taken the plan of his novels, the different characters in them, the pedantry, the philosophy, the jokes and the pathos, the astonishment of the reading portion of society was indescribable; and so great a curiosity was there to test the truth of the doctor's assertions, that the value of Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy immediately became double in the book market.

The plan of Tristram Shandy was taken from the 'Sereès of Bouchet,' which "consist," says Dr. Ferriar, "of a set of regular conversations, held, as the title implies, in the evening generally during supper, and may be regarded as transcripts of the petits soupers of that age. A subject of discussion is proposed each evening, generally by the host, and it is treated characteristically with a mixture of great knowledge and light humour. Every conversation concludes with a jest. The chief characters, supported through the whole volume which I had first seen, are a man of learning, such as the times afforded, a soldier very fond of talking over his past dangers, a physician, who is sometimes found deficient in philosophy, and a droll who winds up all

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with his raillery." In short from Bouchet came the outlines of Mr. Shandy, Uncle Toby, Dr. Slop, and Yorick.

To Rabelais, it would be impossible to say how much, for good and for ill, Sterne is indebted. From him he took his mountebank mannerism, and his literary ambition, at least as he thought. But Sterne failed to perceive the real value and pith of Rabelais, just as he was in error in his estimate of Burton. All he did was to cut his foolscap, and tune his bells after those of the curate of Meudon, but the imitation went no further.

Of Rabelais, Coleridge said, "One cannot help regretting that no friend of Rabelais (and surely friends he must have had) has left an authentic account of him. His buffoonery was merely Brutus' rough stick, which contained a rod of gold; it was necessary as an amulet against the monks and bigots. Beyond a doubt, he was amongst the deepest as well as the boldest thinkers of his age. Never was a more plausible, and seldom, I am persuaded, a less appropriate line than the thousand times quoted

"Rabelais laughing in his easy chair,"

of Mr. Pope. The caricature of his filth and sanyism proves how fully he both knew and felt the danger in which he stood. I could write a treatise in proof and praise of the morality and moral elevation of Rabelais' work which would make the church stare and the conventicle groan, and yet should be the truth and nothing but the truth. I class Rabelais with the creative minds of the world, Shakspeare, Dante, Cervantes."

"Voltaire," says Dr. Ferriar, "has compared the merits of Rabelais and Sterne, as satirists of the abuse of learning, and I think has done neither of them justice. This great distinction is obvious; that *Rabelais derided absurdities then existing in full force*, and intermingled much sterling sense with the grossest parts of his book; *Sterne, on the contrary*,

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laughs at many exploded opinions and forsaken fooleries, and contrives to degrade some of his most solemn passages by a vicious levity. Rabelais flew a higher pitch, too, than Sterne. Great part of the voyage to the Pays de Lanternois, which so severely stigmatises the vices of the Romish Clergy of that age, was performed in more hazard of fire than water."

"The style of Rabelais," says Sir Walter Scott when speaking of Sterne, "which he assumed for his model, is to the highest excess rambling, excursive, and intermingled with absurdities. But Rabelais was in some measure compelled to adopt the Harlequin's habit, in order that, like licensed jesters, he might, under the cover of his folly, have permission to vent his satire against church and state. Sterne assumed the manner of his master only as a mode of attracting attention, and of making the public stare; and, therefore, his extravagances, like those of a feigned madman, are cold and forced, even in the midst of his most irregular flights. A man may, in the present day, be, with perfect impunity, as wise and as witty, nay, as satirical as he can, without assuming the cap and bells of the ancient jester as an apology; and that Sterne chose voluntarily to appear under such a disguise, must be set down as mere affectation, and ranked with his unmeaning tricks of blank or marbled pages, employed merely ad captandum vulgus." But the black, and blank, and marbled pages of "Tristram Shandy" had no more originality in them than Sterne's other buffooneries, being copied from Dr. Fludd's Utriusque cosmi Historia.

Another writer to whom Sterne was much indebted, without having the honesty to acknowledge it, was Bercalde, Sieur de Verville, canon of the Cathedral of Tours, who published in 1599 the "Moyen de Parvenir." Dr. Ferriar obtained the copy of the "Moyen de Parvenir" that belonged to Sterne, and says it bore marks of being well turned over.

As the general plan of "Tristram Shandy" had its origin

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from other powers than those of Sterne's creative fancy, so were the various characters and incidents in the filling up, taken from comparatively unknown writers, or from real life.*

Dr. Slop was a portrait of one Dr. Burton, a medical man, who, in the disturbed times in which he lived, obtained great notoriety as a partisan of the Pretender, and came into hostile contact with Dr. Sterne, Laurence's uncle. It was animosity arising from this feud between Sterne's family and the man-midwife that gave the most ridiculous touches to Dr. Slop. This Burton had a vehement controversy with one Dr. Smellie who, attacking Burton's book on obstetric practice, mistook the head piece of a print for the name of an author, and quoted *Lithopædus Senonensis* with much gravity. This mistake is only equalled by one made by a late well-known medical practitioner in Suffolk, who on being asked by a professional brother if he had any faith in phrenology, replied, "that he didn't keep it in his surgery, but he should not wonder if large doses given every two hours might be useful in obstinate cases of gout."

Uncle Toby and the Widow Wadman were personal sketches. The painful nature of Uncle Toby's wound, so fruitful a topic for Sterne's obscene wit, was extracted from a page of history. Thirty-six years before the siege of Namur, a young nobleman, named Bartholomew de Sorlisi, in Charles's service, at the battle of Fühnen, received a wound such as it is insinuated Uncle Toby suffered from; and the love perplexities of this unfortunate young man, arising out of the effects of his accident, attracted the attention of all the divines in Europe.

Any reader wishing for the entire list of Sterne's pilfer-

* An interesting fragment from William Davis's Olio gives us La Fleur's real history, and shows us the origin in actual experience of the scenes with "Poor Maria," "The Dead Ass," "The Monk," &c.

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ings—from Rabelais, Beroalde, Bouchet, Tabarin, Bruscambille, Montaigne, Scarron, Lord Bacon, Donne, Burton, &c. &c.—must go to Dr. Ferriar's work. All that can be done here is to give a few of the more remarkable plagiarisms.

First take a portion of "the fragment" from the chapter "on whiskers" from Sterne.

"The lady Baussiere rode on.

"One denier, cried the order of mercy—one single denier, in behalf of a thousand patient captives, whose eyes look towards heaven and you for their redemption.

"The lady Baussiere rode on.

"Pity the unhappy, said a devout, venerable, hoary-headed man, meekly holding up a box, begirt with iron, in his withered hands—I beg for the unfortunate—good my lady, 'tis for a prison—for an hospital—'tis for an old man,—a poor man undone by shipwreck, by suretyship, by fire. I call God and all his angels to witness—'tis to clothe the naked—to feed the hungry—'tis to comfort the sick and the broken-hearted.

"The lady Baussiere rode on.

"A decayed kinsman bowed himself to the ground.

"The lady Baussiere rode on.

"He ran begging bare-headed on one side of her palfrey, conjuring her by the former bonds of friendship, alliance, consanguinity, &c.—cousins, aunt, sister, mother—for virtue's sake, for your own, for mine, for Christ's sake, remember me—pity me.

"The lady Baussiere rode on."

Bravo, Mr. Sterne!—and now for Democritus Junior.

"A poor decayed kinsman of his sets upon him by the way in all his jollity, and runs begging bare-headed by him, conjuring him by those former bonds of friendship, alliance, consanguinity, &c., uncle, cousin, brother, father, show some pity for Christ's sake, pity a sick man, an old man, &c.

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he cares not, ride on: pretend sickness, inevitable loss of limbs, plead suretyship, or shipwreck, fires, common calamities, shew thy wants and imperfections—swear, protest, take God and all his angels to witness, quære peregrinum, he is not touched with it, pauper ubique jacet, ride on, he takes no notice of it. Put up a supplication to him in the name of a thousand orphans, an hospital, a spittle, a prison, as he goes by, they cry out to him for aid; ride on.—Show him a decayed haven, a bridge, a school, a fortification, &c. or some other public work; ride on.—Good your worship, your honour, for God's sake, your country's sake; ride on."

"Shall we," says Sterne, with charming audacity, "for ever make new books, as apothecaries make new medicines, by pouring only out of one vessel into another? Are we for ever to be twisting and untwining the same rope—for ever in the same track—for ever at the same pace?"

Burton says, "As apothecaries we make new mixtures, every day pour out of one vessel into another; and as the Romans robbed all the cities in the world to set out their bad sited Rome, we skim the cream of other men's wits, pick the choice flowers of their tilled gardens to set out our own sterile plots. We weave the same web, still twist the same rope again and again."

Sterne wrote, "Was I in a condition to stipulate with death, as I am this moment with my apothecary, I should certainly declare against submitting to it before my friend; and, therefore, I never seriously think upon the mode and manner of this great catastrophe, which generally takes up and torments my thoughts as much as the catastrophe itself, but I constantly draw the curtain across it with this wish, that the Disposer of all things may so order it that it happened not to me in my own house, but rather in some decent inn. At home, I know it, the concern of my friends, and the last services of wiping my brows and smoothing my pillow which the quivering hand of pale

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affection shall pay me, will so crucify my soul that I shall die of a distemper which my physician is not aware of; but in an inn, the few cold offices I wanted would be purchased with a few guineas, and paid me with an undisturbed but punctual attention."

Here is Bishop Burnet's way of putting it. "He (Archbishop Leighton) used often to say, that if he were to choose a place to die in it would be at an inn, it looking like a pilgrim's going home, to whom this world was all an inn, and who was weary of the noise and confusion in it. He added that the officious tenderness and care of friends was an entanglement to a dying man; and that the unconcerned attendance of those that could be procured in such a place would give less disturbance."

And Leighton took this noble philosophy from the Cato of Cicero: "Ex vitâ ita discedo, tanquam hospitio, non tanquam ex domo; commorandi enim natura diversorium nobis dedit, non habitandi locum."

Sterne:—"In short, my father advanced so very slowly with his work, and I began to live and get forward at such a rate, that if an event had not happened, &c. I verily believe I had put by my father, and left him drawing a sun-dial for no better purpose than to be buried underground."

Donne:—"And all your graces no more use shall have

"'Than a sun-dial in a grave.'"

Sterne:—"My uncle Toby was a man patient of injuries; not from want of courage; I have told you in the fifth chapter of this second book, 'that he was a man of courage;' and will add here, that where just occasions presented, or called it forth, I know no man under whose arms I would sooner have taken shelter; nor did this arise from any insensibility or obtuseness of his intellectual parts; for he felt this insult of my father's as feelingly as a man could do; but he was of a peaceful, placid nature—no jarring element

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within it—all was mixed up so kindly within him; my uncle Toby had scarce a heart to retaliate upon a fly.

"—Go—says he, one day at dinner, to an overgrown one which had buzzed about his nose, and tormented him cruelly all dinner time, and which, after infinite attempts, he had caught at last, as it flew by him:—I'll not hurt thee, says my Uncle Toby, rising from his chair and going across the room, with the fly in his hand, I'll not hurt a hair of thy head:—Go, says he, lifting up the sash and opening his hand as he spoke to let it escape; go, poor devil, get thee gone; why should I hurt thee? this world is surely wide enough to hold both thee and me."

When Sterne had a good story, he was not content with telling it once, but was continually alluding to it, and after an interval of years, serving it up with a new seasoning. It was so with his postchaise, and his donkey. It was so with this fly. In Vol. II. book xii. of "Tristram," he alludes to the incident. And in Vol. VI. chap. xxiv., after a lapse of years, we get it thus:—"When Trim, an' please your honour, got to the shop, there was nobody in it, but a poor negro girl, with a bunch of white feathers lightly tied to the end of a long cane *flapping away flies, not killing them. 'Tis a pretty picture! said my uncle Toby. She had suffered persecution, Trim, and had learnt mercy.*"

When a man has a horse, we have no objection to his riding it, as much as mercy will allow, but a knight on a borrowed steed ought to respect its owner. And this fly (now increased and multiplied) is a royal possession, and Yorick had no right to be everlastingly shooting his needles through it. "King James," it is read in Selden's Table-talk, said to the fly, "Have I not three kingdoms, and thou must needs fly into my eye?"

"The plan of the 'Sentimental Journey,'" says Ferriar, "seems to have been taken from the little French pieces, which have had such celebrity; the *Voyage* of Chapelle,

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and the *Voyage* of Fontaine; the merit of which consists in making trifles considerable." How its beauties were drawn from the possessions of Burton, Scarron, and others, but few are ignorant. Here is from Sterne: —

A FRAGMENT.

"The town of Abdera, notwithstanding Democritus lived there, trying all the powers of irony and laughter to reclaim it, was the vilest and most profligate town in all Thrace. What for poisons, conspiracies, and assassinations, libels, pasquinades, and tumults, there was no going there by day, 'twas worse by night.

"Now, when things were at the worst, it came to pass that the Andromeda of Euripides being represented at Abdera, the whole orchestra was delighted with it; but of all the passages that delighted them, nothing operated more upon their imaginations than the tender strokes of nature which the poet had wrought up in that pathetic speech of Perseus, 'O Cupid, prince of Gods and men, &c.' Every man almost spoke pure iambics the next day, and talked of nothing but Perseus's pathetic address—'O Cupid, prince of Gods and men'—in every street of Abdera, in every house, 'O Cupid! Cupid!' in every mouth, like the natural notes of some sweet melody, which drops from it whether it will or no, nothing but 'Cupid! Cupid! prince of Gods and men.' The fire caught, and the whole city, like the heart of one man, opened itself to Love.

"No pharmacopolist could sell one grain of hellebore, not a single armourer had a heart to forge one instrument of death, friendship and virtue met together, and kissed each other in the street, the golden age returned, and hung over the town of Abdera, every Abderite took his eaten pipe, and every Abderitish woman left her purple web, and chastely sat her down, and listened to the song.

"'Twas only in the power, says the Fragment, of the god whose empire extendeth from heaven to earth, and even to the depths of the sea, to have done this."

"At Abdera in Thrace," says Burton, "Andromeeda, one of Euripides' tragedies being played, the spectators were so much moved with the object, and those pathetical speeches of Perseus among the rest, O Cupid, prince of Gods and men, &c., that every man almost, a good while after, spake pure iambics, and raved still on Perseus's speech, O Cupid, prince of Gods and men. As carmen, boys, and

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prentices when a new song is published with us, go singing that new tune still in the streets, they continually acted that tragical part of Perseus, and in every man's mouth was, O Cupid, and in every street, O Cupid, in every house almost, O Cupid, prince of Gods and men; pronouncing still, like stage-players, O Cupid. They were so possessed all with that rapture, and thought of that pathetical love-speech, they could not, a long time after, forget, or drive it out of their minds, but, O Cupid, prince of Gods and men, was ever in their mouths."

Burton forgot to quote his author, so Sterne not knowing this exquisite piece was taken from Lucian's Essay on the method of writing history, introduced it to his readers as "a fragment." Who has not made acquaintance with Sterne's dwarf in the theatre at Paris?

"At the end of the orchestra, and betwixt that and the first side-box, there is a small esplanade left, where, when the house is full numbers of all ranks take sanctuary. Though you stand, as in the parterre, you pay the same price as in the orchestra. A poor defenceless being of this order had got thrust somehow or other into this luckless place—the night was hot, and he was surrounded by beings two feet and a half higher than himself. The dwarf suffered inexpressibly on all sides; but the thing which incommoded him most was a tall corpulent German, near seven feet high, who stood directly betwixt him and all possibility of seeing either the stage or the actors. The poor dwarf did all he could to get a peep at what was going forwards, by seeking for some little opening betwixt the man's arm and his body, trying first one side and then the other; but the German stood square, in the most unaccommodating posture that can be imagined—the dwarf might as well have been placed at the bottom of the deepest draw-well in Paris; so he civilly reached up his hand to the German's sleeve, and told him his distress. The German turned his head back, looked

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down upon him as Goliath did upon David—and unfeelingly resumed his posture.

"I was just then taking a pinch of snuff out of my monk's little horn box. And how would thy meek and courteous spirit, my dear monk! so tempered to *bear and forbear!*—how sweetly would it have lent an ear to this poor soul's complaint.

"The old French officer, seeing me lift up my eyes with an emotion, as I made the apostrophe, took the liberty to ask me what was the matter. I told him the story in three words; and added how inhuman it was.

"By this time the dwarf was driven to extremes, and in his first transports, which are generally unreasonable, had told the German he would cut off his long queue with his knife. The German looked back coolly, and told him he was welcome if he could reach it.

"An injury, sharpened by an insult, be it to whom it will, makes every man of sentiment a party.—I could have leaped out of the box to have redressed it.—The old French officer did it with much less confusion; for leaning a little over, and nodding to a sentinel, and pointing at the same time with his finger to the distress, the sentinel made way up to it. There was no occasion to tell the grievance, the thing told itself—so thrusting back the German instantly with his musket, he took the poor dwarf by the hand, and placed him before him. 'This is noble!' said I, clapping my hands together.—'And yet you would not permit this,' said the old officer, 'in England.'

"In England, dear sir," said I, "*we all sit at our ease.*"

He who shall search the Roman Comique of Scarron will find, at Chap. XVII. of Tome II., the following particulars concerning poor Ragotin. "Il vint tard á la comedie, et pour la punition de ses peches, il se plaça derriere un gentilhomme à large eschine, et couvert d'une grosse casaque qui grossissoit beaucoup sa figure. Il etoit d'une taille si

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haute au dessus des plus grandes, qu'encore qu'il fut assis; Ragotin qui n' etoit separé de lui que d'un rang de sieges, crut qu'il etoit debout, et lui cria incessament qu'il assit comme les autres, ne pouvant croire qu'un homme assit ne dust pas avoir sa tete au niveau de toutes celles de la compagnie. Ce gentilhomme qui se nommoit la Baguenodiere, ignora longtemps que Ragotin parlat á lui. Enfin Ragotin l'appella Mr. á la plume verte, et comme veritablement il en avoit une bien touffue bien sale, et peu fine, il tourna la teste, et vit le petit impatient qui lui dit assez rudement qu'il s'assit. La Baguenodiere en fut si peu ému, qu'il se retourna vers le theatre, comme si de rien n'eut eté. Ragotin lui recria encore qu'il s'assit. Il tourna encore la tete devers lui; le regarda et se retourna vers le theatre. Ragotin recria, Baguenodiere tourna la tete pour la troisieme fois; regarda son homme, et pour la troisieme fois se retourna vers le theatre. Tant que dura la comedie, Ragotin, lui cria de meme force qu'il s'assit, et la Baguenodiere le regarda toujours d'un meme flegme, capable de faire enrager tout le genre humain."

How infinitely preferable is Sterne's sketch to Scarron's; and in this plagiarism we think the nature of Sterne's genius forcibly declares itself. He was that which it was his boast to be—a man of feeling. All his amusements were polite accomplishments; all his actions were regulated by that "good taste" which is the appropriate costume of fashionable society, and anything which ran counter to this esthetic code immediately cut him to the quick. He read Scarron's story, was disgusted at the exultation it expressed over one of nature's unfortunates, and in anger against the outrage, and then in commiseration for the afflicted, he drew, with tears in his eyes, his statement of the case, aggravating every bad feature and cutting away every redeeming point of the insult. That which he took forcible possession of he so improved by the application of

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his peculiar talents that we feel he established a sort of rightful property in it, just as the colonist does in the soil he redeems from the comparatively unserviceable state of nature. One feels this especially in some of the Burtonian acres of his strangely cultivated estate. Take, as instances, that capital chapter of "Tristram Shandy," in which Mr. Shandy takes comfort from philosophy on the loss of his son, Bobby, and the apologetic oration of Uncle Toby for his wish to carry on in his back garden the war which the peace of Utrecht had put an end to.

Such passages as those, betraying such a subtle power of *perceiving*, if not of *creating* the humourous (for a critic, however much he may admire Sterne for artistic facility and grace, is afraid to pronounce any of his sentiments or positions *original*), make the reader angry that Sterne should have wasted his powers in elaborating nasty stories and obscene inuendo, and in constructing pages upon pages of ponderous tomfoolery so stupid they make one yawn, and yet just grotesque enough to prevent one dropping into comfortable sleep. What book amongst the classics of the English language creates such a sensation of mingled boredom and irritation as "Tristram Shandy?" Of the hundreds who open it to enjoy the pathetic, or humourous, or licentious parts, there are not two who have ever fairly read it through. The Koran is nothing to it for inducing weariness and mental disquiet. After an hour's honest *straight on* reading there are few who do not feel to the author as they do to a third-rate clown who has performed his antics in the saw-dust, and uttered his stale jokes over and over again; but then just as we are on the point of turning away in a passion, the fellow is guilty of such an indescribably ridiculous grimace or distortion of his spinal column we are compelled to laugh and stop on for another five minutes. Most people have shed tears over stories from "Tristram Shandy," and yet the book is not popular.

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Dr. Johnson said well, "Nothing odd will do long. 'Tristram Shandy' did not last." Posterity has declared the justice of the sentence. Soon after Sterne's death, "Tristram Shandy" *ceased to be* as a popular book, and it has never recovered its lost position. Of the indecencies of it Coleridge felicitously remarked, "With regard to Sterne, and the charge of licentiousness which presses so seriously upon his character as a writer, I would remark that there is a sort of knowingness, the wit of which depends, first, on the modesty it gives pain to; or, secondly, on the innocence and innocent ignorance over which it triumphs; thirdly, on a certain oscillation in the individual's own mind between the remaining good and the encroaching evil of his nature, a sort of dallying with the devil, a fluxionary act of combining courage and cowardice, as when a man snuffs a candle with his fingers for the first time, or better still, perhaps, like that trembling daring with which a child touches a hot tea urn, because it has been forbidden; so that the mind has its own white and black angel, the same or similar amusement, as may be supposed to take place between an old debauchee and a prude—she feeling resentment, on the one hand, from a prudential anxiety to preserve appearances and have a character, and, on the other, an inward sympathy with the enemy. We have only to suppose society innocent, and then nine-tenths of this sort of wit would be like a stone that falls in snow, making no sound because exciting no resistance; the remainder rests on its being an offence against the good manners of human nature itself!"

What did Sterne contribute to the English novel? Quite a new element, and an unmistakable one. Scarcely a novel issued from the Minerva press, scarcely one comes from the incomparable novelists of Europe and America in our own day, in which 'the Sterne art,' is not immediately to be recognised. Prolix and tedious as Sterne could be when it was his whim, he showed us how to tell stories gracefully.

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No writer previous to him was so skilful a narrator; knew so well how to arrest the attention; by the repetition of what notes to work the charm. Dealing largely in bad grammar and obscure and careless expressions, he had a delicate acquaintance with and ready command of words when the nicety of his subject required them. In him we find no vast creations, no original forms of architecture, but a rare variety of tracery and ornament with which every later builder has decorated his structures.

Many were, and some still are, cajoled by Yorick's affectation of learning. "Readers are often inclined to regard with veneration, what they do not understand. They suppose a work to be deep, in proportion to its darkness, and give the author credit for recondite learning, in many passages, where his incapacity or his carelessness have prevented him from explaining himself with clearness. It was not the business of Sterne to undeceive those, who considered his Tristram a work of unfathomable knowledge."

When, however, criticism has stripped Sterne of his false plumage, has condemned him for his dishonesty, and held him up to ridicule for his absurd pretensions, he must still be allowed the merit of this much of peculiar genius, that of addressing himself to others. He had the tact and adroitness, though he was deficient in the graver powers, of intellect. Knowing only the superficial of human nature, he can still touch the very centre of our affections. The death of an honest man, the impulsive pity of a simple one, the love madness of a peasant girl, the sufferings of a donkey, are his highest topics, but the simple eloquence with which he treats them—his perfect art—penetrates to the depths.

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CHAPTER X.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

So many times, and in such variety of styles, has the life of Oliver Goldsmith been written, that in this age, of which his memoir by Forster is *the* production of biographical literature, there will doubtless be some ready to charge us with making vain repetitions in attempting another portrait of that remarkable man. Graver objections could however be urged against us if we were altogether to exclude him from these pages. And the story of his experiences is one which will bear frequent telling, and the moral they enforce, like the teaching of a village spire, can never be out of place.

Born in an obscure and almost unapproachable Irish village, Pallas or Pallasmore, co. Longford, on the 10th of November, 1728, Oliver entered the world as he left it—a child of poverty. His father was a needy parson of the established church, with the *famous* income of *£40 a year*. In 1730, two years after little Oliver's birth, the worthy clergyman succeeded to the living of Kilkenny West, a parish about six miles from Pallasmore, and so obtained a revenue of almost £200 per annum, but this comparative prosperity was in truth only a just tolerable burden of penury; for the Rev. Charles Goldsmith had seven children besides the poet—three girls and four boys. Of this family two died in youth, but the others survived to experience different fortunes. Henry lived and died a humble village pastor and schoolmaster; Charles made an unfortunate emigration to Jamaica, and eventually died in extreme poverty in London at the beginning of the present century;

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Maurice was a drudging cabinet maker in Charlestown, co. Roscommon; Catherine became the wife of a rich man, who seems to have cherished a prudent dislike to poor relations; and Jane married a Mr. Johnston, whose penilessness accorded with the condition of his wife's family. Of Oliver we have now to speak.

An ugly little boy, deeply marked by the small-pox which attacked him in his seventh or eighth year, "an impenetrably stupid" little boy, who would not learn to read, and yet a droll, merry little fright, Oliver in his childhood made acquaintance with the treatment he was to experience all through life, a treatment in which contempt, severity, and caressing, jostled each other. On the 11th of June, 1745, after having scrambled through a poor preliminary education in different schools and under indifferent masters, Oliver entered the University of Dublin, covering his ragged coat and rough head with the coarse sleeveless gown of black stuff and the red cap of a sizar. The boy was just upon seventeen years of age, had a vague notion that his desire to be a scholar distinguished him from the vulgar of the human race, had a jealous and proud consciousness that he was a gentleman of a gentle family, and withal harboured in his young untaught mind an ambition for distinction, and a morbid love of approbation. His extreme ugliness was not, it would seem, a sufficient torture to his greater vanity; fate had other mortifications in store for him. As a recipient of college charity he had to wear the blood red badge of servitude, to shoulder a broom and sweep the courts of Trinity, to carry dishes from the kitchen to the hall, and to perform all the duties of a waiter at the dinner till the fellows rose from their table. His good uncle Contarine, who married the Rev. Charles Goldsmith's sister, supplied him from time to time with small sums of money, but they were not sufficient for his petty necessities; he had to pawn his books of study, to write songs at five shillings

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a piece, for the ballad-mongers, and still to go about in rags, and badly shod. When he came in after life to be a celebrated man, and the rage of the town was directed to him, bishops and statesmen were fond of talking about their old college companion, Dr. Goldsmith; but little intercourse did the rich and well favoured young gentlemen, who in due course developed into rulers of the church and directors of the country, hold with the red-capped sizar. Bullies are to be found everywhere, but we are inclined to think they are more plentiful amongst the ranks of pedagogues than elsewhere, and that they exist in more gigantic proportions amongst college tutors than in any humbler class of the scholastic profession. What university man cannot point to a lecture room where a much fuller measure of professorial urbanity is bestowed on my Lord Tufto than on hearty Jack Smith, and where the needy scholar smarts under insolent reproof that never visits the shortcomings of a youthful patrician? Goldsmith's tutor, Mr. Theaker Wilder, was one of a class. This gentleman after rating and storming at the luckless sizar on every imaginable ground, and with every figure of rhetoric, after sneering at his want of money, and swearing at him for his stupidity and nervousness, concluded by knocking him down with his fist. But even while under the oppression of this brute, Goldsmith had his minutes of happiness. At night he prowled about the city, and at the corners of gin and whisky palaces heard his ballads sung to admiring audiences of beggars. Poor too as he was, he was continually giving to those who were poorer; and on one occasion he gave the blankets off his bed to the homeless mother of five starving children. The weather was bitterly cold, and the generous young man to obtain the requisite warmth for himself, cut open his mattress at the top and slipped down into the stuffing.

No wonder that Oliver's university career was not

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crowned with honour. The only academical prize he gained, was a paltry exhibition, worth about thirty shillings; and this success so elated him, that he gave a noisy party which brought Mr. Wilder to his room, and induced that polished gentleman to strike the jubilant exhibitioner to the ground. It is interesting to know that Mr. Theaker Wilder was killed in a drunken riot, just at the time when Goldsmith's social success was at its height.

Unlike Johnson, Goldsmith left his university with a degree. On February 27, 1749, he was made a bachelor of arts, and took his leave of Alma Mater. His father had been dead two years; his mother lived in straitened circumstances—they always had been strait enough at Ballymahon; his brother Henry had fixed himself in the old parsonage at Pallas, and, as his father had done, was working hard for £40 per annum. Oliver consented to enter the church, and after spending the two years that followed his leaving Dublin at Ballymahon, he applied to the Bishop of Elphin to ordain him. His lordship after having had interview with him, declined to grant his request, in fact, plucked him. The cause of this rejection is uncertain. Oliver's sister, like a sister, and God bless her! for it, affirmed that the bishop only objected to her brother's youth; there were some who said that Mr. Theaker Wilder's malice had influenced the episcopal judgment; and others declare that the offence which effected Goldsmith's rejection, was his presenting himself for ordination in scarlet breeches. It is, however, more than probable that he was examined, and found to want that slight acquaintance with the scriptures and the thirty-nine articles magnificently called "Divinity," which is expected in candidates for orders. Certainly Oliver was not an industrious student when at Dublin, and the two years passed at Ballymahon had been consumed in fishing, gossiping, writing verses for and wheedling money out of Uncle Con-

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tarine, gambling and carousing at the village whisky shop, playing the flute, and running errands for his mother. At this period of his life, there were few signs of what he was to be. To the most charitable and discerning observer, he appeared little more than an ungainly, dissolute, affectionate Irish blackguard, who had abused what few advantages had come in his humble path. One good friend he had at this critical time, his Uncle Contarine. As long as his reason remained to him, this good man was an ever present help to his nephew; and now he obtained for him the post of tutor in the family of Mr. Flinn, a wealthy grandee of the county. At the end of a year, Oliver lost his place, in consequence of accusing one of Mr. Flinn's family of cheating at cards, and the money saved from his salary was soon lost. Having failed in his attempt to get himself made a priest, and having met with no better success in the vocation of a tutor, Oliver now wished to be a lawyer. The idea of being "a Templar" tickled the vanity of the honest fellow, and uncle Contarine firmly believing that the boy would turn out splendidly, sooner or later, gave him £50. Oliver started for London, but he got no further on his way than Dublin, where he lost his £50 by gambling. On his return to Ballymahon, his poor mother's cottage was closed against him; for a short time he lived with his brother Henry at Pallas, but was soon excluded from that house also. The ne'er-do-weel was then received by the long-suffering uncle Contarine, whom he exerted himself to please, and with whose daughter he fell in love.

It was the autumn of 1752, that Oliver made another start in life, by going to Edinburgh to study medicine with a view to becoming a physician. Uncle Contarine supplied him with another purse, and Goldsmith arrived at his destination without being plundered by sharpers. His residence at Edinburgh was much more pleasant than his sojourn at the university of Dublin; he was poor, but his

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poverty was no new experience, and it had many companions; the sums his kind uncle sent him were few and small, but they were enough to enable him to live with decency, and sometimes to indulge in a little display in dress. It would appear that his industry in some of the classes, especially that of Chemistry, was laudable. But he left Edinburgh without any diploma, and went to Leyden, to pursue his studies. After residing a year at Leyden, he quitted that university, and without making an effort for a degree, he started forth on that pedestrian wandering over the fairest countries of Europe, which supplied him with the materials for his first and best poem. Without money to help him on his way, he relied on his skill in flute-playing and mendicancy for support. Exactly as he paints his Traveller, so he made his slow and vagrant progress. The subsequent display of his genius has given the rosy colouring of romance to this vagabond part of his career, and makes his path seem much fairer than it was. When we speak of his piping under the clear Italian sky to simple peasants, and being hospitably welcomed to share their modest meal, we lose sight of the dirt, the sordid suffering, and the degrading conditions which are inseparable from the lot of a penniless tramp. It was not a solitary insult that made him years afterwards pen the bitter couplet,

> "Or onward where the rude Carinthian boor
> Against the houseless stranger shuts the door."

The daily incidents of that passage of vagrant beggary, as they came upon him, wore a very different appearance to what they did in the retrospect when long afterwards he composed "The Traveller." Goldsmith's nature was especially sensitive of external circumstances, and of all men he, vain, ardent, and affectionate—was the last to be *philosophically* indifferent to the scorn, the contemptuous commiseration, and the compassionate suspicion which surrounded him

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wherever he went. Doubtless he was unaffected by several of the ingredients of his degradation, but his indifference was the consequence of constant association with meanness and dishonesty having blunted his taste and crushed his manly pride. He lived to be ashamed of many of the attendant circumstances of his wanderings, and to repent having admitted in his writings the public so largely to his confidence; and his anxiety to draw a veil over certain unmanly portions of his life, has subjected him to the censure of several of his biographers, who charge him with *false shame* for doing that which to our mind is clearly indicative of *true delicacy*.

To track him throughout the course of his wanderings is impossible; probably, he himself, on returning to England, could not have recalled to mind the many turnings of his devious route. As he passed through Flanders, he visited Louvain, where it is supposed by some the degree of bachelor of medicine was conferred on him. For a short time during his travels, he acted as tutor to a young plebeian of wealth. He visited Paris, and with the courage of a bashful man thrust his way into many scenes of interest. In Geneva he introduced himself to Voltaire, who was then enjoying his newly-purchased residence—*Les Délices*. And he saw Florence, Verona, Mantua, Milan, Padua—at the university of which last-named city it has also been asserted he obtained the medical degree he laid claim to. Of his right to his title of M.B. there is really no evidence beyond his assumption of it, and the consent of his friends that he was to be spoken of as Dr. Goldsmith. Certainly, he obtained the rank originally in no British university, and the fact that it is unknown whether any university whatever gave it to him, justifies us in regarding his medical style at least with distrust.

On the 1st of February, 1756, Oliver Goldsmith touched British ground at Dover. At last he was going to grapple

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with the business of life; and certainly, as far as human discernment and judgment could form an opinion, his career hitherto had been far from promising. He was twenty-eight years old, and had "positively done nothing," as the phrase goes. He was short and clumsy in figure, was very ugly, and had a singularly mean appearance, which made Miss Reynolds say he looked like a journeyman tailor; he was bashful, vain, and unacquainted with the manners of polite society. His Irish brogue, very broad to his dying day, was now excruciatingly harsh; his education was the reverse of complete, for a smattering of chemistry, and history, and Latin, and Greek must have been the sum of his acquirements in the way of learning; he had not a penny in his pocket, and did not know where to look for one, and he was now without friends;—his intercourse with Ireland had almost entirely stopped, his uncle Contarine, though still living, was not in a position to communicate with him, and those of his old relations and acquaintance who could have helped him thought he had better help himself. But against these drawbacks he had something to advance in his favour. He was, or said he was, an M.B. of a foreign university; he had visited several countries as a beggar, and he played the flute well enough to soothe himself in moments of sorrow; he must have been a fair modern linguist, and he was blessed with the sanguine temperament of his countrymen.

Lonely and unfriended he stood in London, without a coin in his pocket, without a friend, almost without hope, and nearly famished with hunger. The future was dark and terrible. For a few months he obtained the means of living as an usher. Such a position is in these days full of discomfort, but then it was utterly despicable; and Goldsmith, though he had trudged a mendicant through Europe, and had left debts unpaid in every town he had visited, had not courage to seek for

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employment as teacher in a school under his own name. This post he soon lost. He wrote to Ireland for help, but no answer was made to his appeals. He begged apothecary after apothecary to use him, medical degree and all, as a shop drudge, but they all refused to have anything to do with him because he could not show "a character." At last a druggist on Fish Street Hill, at the corner of Monument Yard, named Jacob, took pity on him, and engaged him as a dispenser. After acting for some months as shopman and runner on errands, in the service of Mr. Jacob, he started on his own account as a poor man's doctor in Bankside, Southwark; but patients who could pay for advice rarely troubled him. The best piece of luck he had in his profession was attending a poor *working* printer, who, in gratitude, introduced him to his master, Mr. Richardson, the printer in Salisbury Court, the friend of Samuel Johnson, and the celebrated novelist. Richardson engaged the poor Irishman as a reader and corrector to the press. But he did not hold this post long, for at the beginning of 1757 he was again an usher in a school. In the Peckham Academy, presided over by Dr. Milner, he made his second essay as a school assistant. Ample evidence exists of the meanness of the position he held, and the discomforts he underwent in this establishment, though *the doctor* and his family treated him with great kindness, *considering he was only an usher*. He was regarded as being just one grade above the knife-boy page, with whom he cracked jokes and maintained a good understanding. The boys of course tormented the affectionate, impulsive, simple, awkward creature, although he was very kind and gentle to them. He used to play to them on the flute, and on one occasion, after laying aside his instrument of music, he expatiated to his audience on the propriety of every gentleman knowing something about music. "But you don't call yourself a gentleman?" exclaimed one of the

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pert urchins, with a laugh of contempt. Goldsmith reddened with shame, passionately chastised the child, and altogether lost his own self command.

It chanced that Griffiths, the bookseller and proprietor of the *Monthly Review*, dined with Dr. Milner, and was introduced to the usher on the April Fools' Day of 1757. Goldsmith's conversation impressed the shrewd tradesman with a notion that he would make a good bookseller's hack. A proposition was soon made and accepted; and ere April closed Goldsmith had engaged to work on the *Monthly Review* for one year, giving up all his time to that publication, and receiving as payment for his services, board and lodging in Griffiths' house in Paternoster Row, and a small salary. And thus in his twenty-ninth year, Goldsmith, not by exertions made to obtain such employment, but from the accident of being thrown in the way of a publisher who offered him work, entered on the profession of authorship—a profession he was to adorn and influence, and which was perhaps surrounded with more difficulties in the middle of the last century than at any other period of our literary history.

The facility with which Goldsmith managed his pen on first using it as an instrument of livelihood is remarkable; doubtless, he expended much patience and labour in perfecting his style, as every young author ought to do, but his maiden article in the *Monthly Review* is composed with a freedom, a polish, and a delicacy which mere pains-taking would never have produced. But he did not long stay in the service of Mr. Griffiths; the vulgar tyranny of both the bookseller and his wife even Goldsmith, seasoned to indignity, could not bear. He was expected to write what he was told, to review books, not according to his own critical sentiments, but the jealousies and trade interests of his employer; and when at last his elegantly-written articles left his desk, he had to see them mutilated and altered by

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Mrs. Griffiths (Smollett addressed her as "the old gentlewoman who directs the *Monthly Review*") who, not satisfied with that means of annoying her drudge, would lay down her scissors and rate him soundly for stupidity and idleness and the absurd airs he gave himself.

Goldsmith left the shop in Paternoster Row after five months' slavery as poor as he entered it, in respect of money, but he carried from the accursed den an inestimable possession, the consciousness that he could under more favourable circumstances amuse and instruct mankind as a writer. The necessity of turning up his stores of information, and of arranging his thoughts in the service of Griffiths, had led him to discover that he was possessed of mental treasures, both natural and acquired, of which he had hitherto been ignorant. Now he began to set his understanding in order, to look life boldly in the face, and to honestly examine himself. For some months he drudged on at the meanest hack-work of scribbling. He published in the February of 1758, a work in two vols. 12mo, entitled, "The Memoirs of a Protestant, condemned to the galleys of France for his Religion. Written by himself. * * * * * * Translated from the original, just published at the Hague, by James Willington." Ashamed of the performance, Goldsmith even in his low estate would not avow himself the author of the translation. But such work would not keep body and soul together. To save himself from starvation he flung aside the pen and once again entered Dr. Milner's school. The doctor was ill, and the usher, in addition to his old hateful duties, had to perform another, to him an especially odious one—that of flogging the boys. In August, 1758, however, he again quitted the Peckham Academy and re-entered the kingdom of Grub Street. He was occupied with his "Enquiry into the State of Polite Learning," with the ordinary tasks of a bookseller's drudge, and lastly with a plan for escaping from literature, and going out to India as a medical officer.

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Dr. Milner had promised to exert himself to get him a medical appointment in the East India Company's service, and Goldsmith wrote to Ireland, bragging, poor fellow, of his prosperity and success as an author, of what he was about to relinquish for the dazzling certainty of vast wealth in the east, and asking for money for an outfit. Perhaps he had not the courage to confess to his Irish friends what a failure life had been; perhaps he thought their generosity would be greater, if they thought he was not in abject need of it. His applications did not meet with the desired response. Dr. Milner, however, succeeded in procuring for him from Mr. Jones, an East India Director, the appointment of medical officer to a factory on the Coromandel Coast. But Goldsmith was unable to avail himself of the presentation, for, either because he could not raise the requisite funds for his passage, or because doubts were raised as to his professional competency, another man was sent out in his place. Disappointed in his hopes of escaping from the fangs of literature to the Coromandel Coast, he presented himself at the Surgeons' Hall, on the 21st of December, 1758, to undergo an examination as to his fitness to be an hospital-mate, and as the books of the College of Surgeons attest *he was plucked*. This fact proves that whatever right he had to the M.B. degree, his medical and surgical acquirements were very slight indeed.

There was nothing for it but to write or starve. He was now the tenant of a garret in Green Arbour Court, Old Bailey, situated between the Old Bailey and the site of Fleet market, a miserable yard that has now been swept away from the impurities of that quarter. There, in a noisome atmosphere, without proper nourishment, in rags, and deafened by the unceasing uproar of "the yard," he plied his quill for Archibald Hamilton, the proprietor of the "Critical Review," and for Griffiths, for whom he continued to work after leaving his house. To obtain posses-

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sion of a decent suit in which to present himself before the Surgeons' Hall examiners, Goldsmith had had recourse to Griffiths, who arranged to become security to a tailor for the new clothes on the poor author agreeing to write him four articles on four books for the *Monthly Review*. A clause however was introduced in the shabby agreement, to the effect that the clothes were to be paid for by a certain day, or returned to the tailor. Goldsmith having acceded to these conditions, trudged off to Green Arbour Court with the four books he had to review, and in due course was plucked in his respectable apparel.

Four days after the rejection at Surgeons' Hall, on the Christmas Day, 1758, bailiffs seized the landlord of Goldsmith's wretched lodging, and were proceeding to drag him off to prison, when Goldsmith, who of course was in debt to the poor man for his rent, ran to a pawnbroker's shop, dressed in his ragged threadbare clothes, and bearing the smart suit in a bundle. He soon returned without the dainty apparel, but with money enough to satisfy the demands of the sheriff's officers. A few more days elapsed, and Goldsmith finding himself very hungry, and without a penny to buy bread with, took Griffiths' four books, and lodged them in the hands of an acquaintance who lent him on them a small sum of money. Scarcely were these transactions completed, when a letter arrived from Griffiths demanding that both clothes and books should be instantly returned or paid for. Furious, and naturally so, was the tradesman when he learnt the truth, and in a fit of indignation he informed Goldsmith in very distinct terms, that he regarded him as "a villain," and "a sharper." For his part in this matter, Griffiths has been, we think, censured with far too much severity; without a question, let it be granted that the bookseller was a grasping, vulgar tyrant, and let him be visited with a liberal share of that contempt which *all* vulgar tyrants merit, and nine-tenths

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of them escape; but in common justice, posterity must not be too hard on him for his present anger. His mode of showing his displeasure was certainly not in accordance with good taste; but abuse was sprinkled about very freely in those days. And with regard to the opprobrious names applied to Goldsmith, let us pause for a minute to consider what they mean in the mouth of an irate man, and then to see how far they were appropriately employed. "Villain" is an offensive word, but it has a very wide range of signification; according to the circumstances which provoke its use, it may mean either the worst and most dangerous of the human species, or merely "a trumpery fellow." When applied to the seducer of virgin innocence, it has the former signification; when used to describe a man who pawns books and wearing apparel not his own, it has the latter. Again, as to the odious term "Sharper." Well, sincerely, and with a determination to be just, we are compelled to say that we do not think Goldsmith had much reason to complain of the accusation, which certainly Griffiths was quite justified in preferring. Let us call to mind who Goldsmith was then, and what Griffiths knew of him. Goldsmith was a penniless Irishman; his appearance was no recommendation, for even in the opinion of his friends it was extremely *mean;* he had had several opportunities of educating himself, and had neglected his repeated advantages; he professed to be a qualified physician, but he had just been plucked at an examination which any intelligent apothecary's assistant could have passed; he was of the lowest grade of hack writers, publishing what he was ashamed to acknowledge; as yet no work had come from his pen that entitled him to be regarded as a man of genius, and certainly his conversation, which was in his hey-day the ridicule of some of the wisest of his associates, was not calculated to impress anyone in his favour; he had scarce a respectable reference in all the wide world; only a few months before, Griffiths had fallen upon

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him when he was an usher in a Peckham Academy, had regarded him as a poor outcast, fit for Grub Street, and likely to be useful to any publisher who took him in hand. Being such a one, Goldsmith committed, under the terrible spur of hunger, an act unquestionably dishonest; he pawned property that did not belong to him, and which he had no right so to employ, and at a time when he had no prospect of redeeming it. The owner of this property when he found how he had been "done," told the man who made so free with what did not belong to him, that he was "a sharper," and we are inclined to the opinion that he was one. Let us make all charitable allowances for Goldsmith who was cruelly tempted; but let us at the same time be just to the bookseller, who, on this one occasion, at least, seems to have spoken a truth—although an unpleasant one. To pursue this subject a few steps further, we may add, that those who are severe in their condemnation of Griffiths ought to remember, that in all probability, he knew more about Goldsmith's way of treating pecuniary liabilities than we do, and that we know quite enough to justify us in saying that he had not a strict sense of honour, or firmness of principle in money matters. When roaming over Europe, he left unpaid bills in every town he entered, and dragged "at each remove a lengthening chain" of debts. And immediately he emerged from obscurity and made good earnings, he lived beyond his income to such an extent, that he died nearly two thousand pounds in debt. A man who so lives, who without any temptation, save the promptings of vanity, habitually indulges in pleasures he cannot afford, and gratifies his passions at the expense of his deluded tradesmen, is certainly a dishonest character. Such sharpers are common in the world, and ninety-and-nine out of every hundred of them escape the obloquy they merit. But why for that reason be so shocked with the bad taste which gives a rogue the lash he merits?

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The difficulty of the clothes and books was finally settled by Goldsmith paying for the former, and redeeming the latter, with portion of a £20 given him by Griffiths for a life of Voltaire, to be prefixed to a translation of the *Henriade*. On the 2nd of April was published "An Enquiry into the Present State of Polite Learning in Europe." Goldsmith's name did not appear on the title page, but he took means to let it be well known that he was the author, and he was right to do so, for the treatise was widely circulated, and made both the booksellers and the public pass sentence on the author as a man of cultivation and literary power. It was composed in the sordid garret in Green Arbour Court, in which retreat Thomas Percy (Percy's Relics) afterwards Bishop of Dromore, and then Vicar of Easton Mauduit in Northamptonshire, and Chaplain to Lord Sussex, called on the writer. There was only one chair in the room, which the visitor was politely requested to take, the master of the apartment seating himself on the window-sill opposite his wretched bed. The courtly priest and the poor poet conversed on literary topics, but they were interrupted by a ragged though well-mannered little girl who entered the room, made a curtsey, and said to Goldsmith, "My mamma sends her compliments, and begs the favour of you to lend her a chamber-pot full of coals."

But at last a decided improvement was to take place in Goldsmith's condition. "The Enquiry" had established him in the opinion of the trade as a man who was worth salt. He was now over thirty years of age, had met with some stern experiences in life, and had served a hard apprenticeship to literature; and now he was to assert and prove his right to be regarded as one of the foremost intellectual characters of his age. On the 6th of October, 1759, commenced the weekly magazine, "The Bee," price threepence. Wilkie, the bookseller, was the proprietor of it, and Goldsmith was its principal contributor; but "The

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Bee," though a busy one, failed to gather honey, and on the first 29th of November after its birth it died. But Goldsmith quickly got a new occupation. Smollet and Newbery, the publisher, started on the first of January, 1760, "The British Magazine, or Monthly Repository for Gentlemen and Ladies," and Goldsmith was engaged to write on it. On the 12th of the same month, "The Public Ledger," a daily newspaper, made its first appearance, and Goldsmith was engaged to write an article twice a week in it, and to be paid a guinea for each article. It was in that Goldsmith wrote "The Citizen of the World; or, Letters from a Chinese Philosopher in London to his Friend in the East." The famous letters were published in the "Ledger," and made a reputation for the journal. At the same time Goldsmith had his hands full of other work; he compiled for Newbery, in four volumes, 12mo., "A Practical Dictionary; or, the Beauties of the English Poets alphabetically displayed," and contributed some papers to the "Christian Magazine," which was conducted by Dodd, the divine of infamous notoriety. By his different sources of gain, Goldsmith was a thriving man; and towards the close of 1760, when he was just upon thirty-two years of age, he bade adieu to Green Arbour Court, and took rooms in Wine Office Court, Fleet Street. The more economical Templars and Lincoln's Inn men, who gain at the point of the pen that scanty sustenance which "the law" declines giving them, often remind themselves of this circumstance as they turn into that court for their beef steak dinners at "The Cheshire Cheese." And the reflection ought to preach patience to the sanguine, ardent, discontented youth who frets because the world is slow to declare his verdant novel better than the magnificent productions of Bulwer, Dickens, and Thackeray, or because the editor of "The Times" does not seek him out and give him a thousand a year for a weekly column. Hush! hush! endure

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bravely and hopefully *for years*;—*any one* can bear misfortune cheerfully for *days*! Think of the weary time Goldsmith passed in his garret, furnished with one chair and a bed, in the noise and pestilential smells of Green Arbour Court! He was thirty-two years old ere he was rich enough to hire two furnished apartments in a court leading out of Fleet Street.

Brighter days were in store. On the 31st of May, 1761, Goldsmith made Johnson's acquaintance. In 1762 he went to Bath and Tunbridge for his health, and wrote a life of his acquaintance, the celebrated Beau Nash, who was recently dead, for which Newbery paid him fourteen guineas. At the close of the same year, he first lodged at Islington, in the house of Mrs. Eliza Fleming, and there, in a pure atmosphere, he toiled on industriously. He paid (or rather, his publisher Newbery for him) £50 per annum, nearly equal to £100 now, for board and lodging. London friends, amongst whom was Hogarth, visited him in this retreat, in which he spent perhaps the most industrious and dignified part of his life. Of course, now that he had more money he began to gratify his passion for gaudy clothes, but as yet he does not appear to have made himself resemble a cockatoo. Amongst his labours at this time, besides endless revisions, compilations, and botchings for publishers, he wrote that "History of England in a series of letters from a nobleman to his son," which is so generally attributed, even now, to Lord Lyttelton. But doubtless he was already employed on more lasting and noble works. In 1763, was formed the club, afterwards known as the Literary Club, amongst whose original members were the savage Johnson, the brilliant Beauclerc, the gentle Reynolds, the polished Langton, Edmund Burke the vehement talker, Hawkins the pompous noodle, and Goldsmith, with his confused manner, hesitating speech, blundering address, and egregious vanity, the butt of the party.

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In 1764, Goldsmith gave up his rooms in Wine-office-court, which he had kept on during his sojourn at Islington, and took part of a set of chambers on the library staircase of the Temple. This was a year of great difficulty with him; but in it he managed to find work, and in the opinion of some, wrote "Goody Two Shoes." Certainly he was employed in the composition of the "Traveller," for Sir Joshua Reynolds called on him one day and read the ink-wet couplet on the author's desk—

> "By sports like these are all their cares beguiled;
> The sports of children satisfy the child."

On the floor, in the centre of the room, sat a little dog on his haunches, wistfully looking at his instructor in that elegant attitude—Oliver Goldsmith!

In the latter part of this year, the memorable scene between Goldsmith and his landlady (in all probability Mrs. Fleming) occurred. The bailiff was ready to bear him off to prison, when Goldsmith sent to Johnson, who came, found him tippling Madeira, took possession of the unfinished manuscript of the "Vicar of Wakefield," and sold it for £60 to Francis Newbery, the nephew of *the* Newbery. What street boy has not read the story in the windows of print shops?

On the 19th of December 1764, was published "*The Traveller;* or, a Prospect of Society, a Poem. By Oliver Goldsmith, M.B." The author was thirty-six years old, and it is the first of his publications that deserves to be called a great work. It was in 1756, that the long devious pilgrimage that supplied the material for the poem was terminated. In the retrospect we doubt not the events of that wandering had a far gentler and more agreeable appearance to Goldsmith, than in the time of their actual occurrence; but the poem, especially in the first edition, has many passages forcibly expressive of the defiant temper

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of an outcast. In the first edition appeared the following lines:—

> "Yet think not, thus when freedom's ills I state,
> I mean to flatter kings, or court the great:
> Perish the wish; for, inly satisfied,
> *Above their pomps I hold my ragged pride.*"

In the second edition, the latter couplet was altered to

> "Ye powers of truth, that bid my soul aspire,
> Far from my bosom drive the low desire."

An amusing consequence of this poem, was the indescribable surprise of the author's acquaintance, that he had wit and genius enough for its production. "Well," exclaimed Chamier, "I do believe that he wrote this poem himself; and let me tell you, that is believing a great deal." "The Club" had agreed to regard Goldy as a poor, inoffensive, absurd, addle-headed scribbler, quite out of place in such distinguished society, but still a well-intentioned bit of insignificance. Those who attributed all the beauties of the poem to Johnson were not few; and Boswell could not conceal his chagrin, when he found his patron warmly extolling the poem, and bestowing generous praise on the writer. "Well," exclaimed Miss Reynolds, after hearing Johnson read it from the beginning to the end, "I never more shall think Dr. Goldsmith ugly." The badgering he got about the first line—

> "Remote, unfriended, melancholy, slow,"

illustrates well the defect of his nervous constitution, and also the boisterous want of consideration he met with in his friends. "What did you mean by slow?" asked Chamier. "Do you mean tardiness of locomotion?" "Yes," replied Goldsmith. "No, Sir," roared Johnson, "you did not mean tardiness of locomotion; you meant that sluggishness of mind which comes upon a man in solitude." Fidgetting, and blushing, Goldy answered, "Ah! *that* was what I

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meant." The fact was Goldsmith's first answer was as much right as the second; but he was too much confused to know whether they were not both wrong.

In 1765, Goldsmith made a fresh attempt to get practice as a physician, in the hope that the popularity of "The Traveller" would bring him patients. But he met with no success, and after experiencing considerable mortification, magnificently declared his intention not only to give up practising, but to leave off prescribing for his friends. "Do so, my dear doctor," said Beauclerc, "whenever you undertake to kill, let it only be your enemies." Besides getting into a better set of chambers, no important event occurred this year in Goldsmith's life that need be here mentioned, with the exception of the publication of "The Vicar of Wakefield," sold considerably more than a year before to F. Newbery. It seems that the bookseller held back "The Vicar," from a fear that it would not "take." Johnson himself, although he sold it, did not think very highly of the novel; and it was not till the success of "The Traveller" had made Goldsmith's name popular, that the purchaser of the fiction felt secure from loss in his bargain.

Of course it is only necessary to mention in these pages the principal of Goldsmith's writings; to discover and enumerate them *all* would be impossible. In 1766 he was paid by Payne, the bookseller, ten guineas for compiling a duodecimo volume of "Poems for Young Ladies. In three parts; Devotional, Moral, and Entertaining." And at the close of the same year he published his "English Grammar," for which he was paid five guineas. What work for the author of "The Traveller," and "The Vicar of Wakefield!"

In the summer of 1766 he resumed his residence in Islington, occupying one room in the turret of Canonbury House, and working honestly in the old style. In the April of the succeeding year a miserable hack-writer, named

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Purdon, dropped down dead in Smithfield. Goldsmith stole, and then liberally bestowed on the poor fellow the epitaph,

"Here lies poor Ned Purdon, from misery freed,
Who long was a bookseller's hack;
He led such a damnable life in this world,
I don't think he'll wish to come back."

Swift had already made use of the epitaph on "Le Mort du Sieur Etienne."

"Il est au bout de ses travaux
Il a passé le Sieur Etienne;
En ce monde il eut tant de maux
Qu'on ne croit pas qu'il revienne."

In 1768 Goldsmith met with his first literary success, in the pecuniary sense of that agreeable word. After undergoing innumerable difficulties from managers and actors, he persuaded Colman (sorely against his will it proved in the last moments of rehearsal) to put "The Good-Natured Man" on the stage. The reception of the comedy on the first night was not very flattering; at times the hisses and cries of "low, low," a favourite term of contempt in that refined age, were loud indeed. After the play, Goldsmith joined his friends in Gerrard Street, where "the club" was held; he ate no supper, but his spirits were so high, and his humour so boisterous, that all supposed he had forgotten the hisses. At a late hour the company departed, leaving Johnson and the author in the room. As soon as he found himself alone with his trusty and well beloved friend he burst into a paroxysm of grief, weeping and declaring that he would never write another line. We can imagine how the compassionate heart of the rugged Johnson was moved to pity, and how tenderly he comforted his suffering brother. Some time afterwards Goldsmith confessed his weakness to Mrs. Thrale in Johnson's presence. "All which, doctor," said the faithful giant, amazed at the

confession, "I thought had been a secret between you and me; and I am sure I would not have said anything about it for the world." When Mrs. Thrale afterwards questioned Johnson about the matter, he said contemptuously that "no man should be expected to sympathise with the sorrows of vanity."

But Goldsmith had substantial consolation at the time of his trouble in the different turn fortune took with regard to his comedy. It was altered to suit the taste of the critics, and was then favoured with applause. He got for "his three nights" £400, and from the publication another £100. Never before in his life had Goldsmith possessed £500 of his own. Forthwith he purchased chambers in Brick Court, Middle Temple, for which he gave £400, and furnished them elegantly with "Wilton carpets, blue morine-covered mahogany sofas, blue morine curtains, chairs corresponding, chimney glasses, Pembroke and card tables, and tasteful bookshelves." He arrayed himself also gorgeously. To make an effective appearance as author at the theatre, he had clad himself in "Syrian bloom satin-grain, and garter-blue silk breeches," price £8 2*s.* 7*d.*, equal nearly to £16 now; but on getting his "lump of money" he ordered a more expensive suit, "lined with silk, and gold buttons." Within three months from the date of this latter purchase he had from his tailors "a suit of mourning," his brother Henry, the pious village pastor, to whom he dedicated "The Traveller," having died. A prudent man would not have spent his hardly earned cash quite so fast; but then Goldsmith was emphatically an imprudent one. He had to borrow, and to pawn his future exertions, to enable him to live up to the "Syrian bloom satin-grain," and the "blue morine curtains."

In 1768, Goldsmith appears first to have entered that classic retreat—now a well-known beer shop, but then a modest and decent farm house—on the Edgeware Road, in

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which much of his later toil with his pen was performed. This, too, was the year in which the Royal Academy was founded, of which Reynolds was the first President, Samuel Johnson the first Professor of Ancient Literature, and Oliver Goldsmith the first Professor of History. And in 1768 it was that Johnson and Goldsmith wandered into Poets' Corner, in Westminster Abbey. Nervously did the former whisper in his friend's ear,

"Forsitan et nostrum nomen miscebitur istis."

They quitted the Abbey, and strolled down the lively Strand to the Temple, when, as they came within sight of Temple Bar, with the charnel remains of the Jacobite executions still affixed to it, Goldsmith raised his hand, and with a droll twinkle in his eye, returned the whisper,

"Forsitan et nostrum . . . miscebitur istis."

Some evidence there is, but very slight, not corroborated and not contradicted by the Oxford University Register, that Goldsmith obtained an "ad eundem" M.B. in that University in the following year, 1769. In the May of this year the "Roman History," which has been a most useful book for schools, was published; and the industrious writer made agreements to supply Griffin with a Natural History in eight volumes, and Davies with a "History of England," in four volumes. The price of the former was fixed at £100 a volume, and for the latter he was to receive in all £500.

Goldsmith, as his means of earning money increased, moved more in society, and indulged more and more in the ordinary dissipations of the time. He dressed extravagantly, played high, drank freely—but not excessively, and indulged in certain coarser pleasures of which few men are pure. He swaggered about in a bloom-coloured coat, and silk inexpressibles; and wore his ungovernable vanity so openly that he was the constant butt of men of half his genius, and

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even had to endure the pity of Mr. Boswell. Reynolds painted his portrait, of which mezzotinto prints were sold in all the picture shops, much to Goldsmith's gratification. But let us not laugh. In the May of 1770, the "Deserted Village" was published. Soon after Goldsmith was made certain of the success of the poem, he started for a trip to Paris, taking under his care Mrs. Hornick and her beautiful daughters. In Paris he heard of his mother's death. In September he was at work again, signing an agreement to supply Davies with an *abridgement* of the Roman History, for fifty guineas. The same publisher had, in the course of the preceding summer, sent forth the "Life of Parnell."

In the August of 1771, the "English History" was published,—an elegant compilation, that is, perhaps, better adapted for children than any of the numerous histories that have since been composed. On the 15th of March, 1773, "She stoops to Conquer" was put before the public. Strange to say, Goldsmith had, 'ere he could get Colman to present this piece, to smart under a repetition of the same insulting rebuffs, the same superficial criticisms, and the same impertinences from the performers as had caused him such exquisite pain when forcing "The Good-natured Man" through the barriers of the green-room. The result of the representation, it is needless to say, was satisfactory to Goldsmith, for he got from "his three nights," between £400 and £500, and he paid off with the copyright a heavy debt, that had long troubled him, to Francis Newbery.

But it was to no purpose that Goldsmith earned handsome sums of money, for he spent them, however large they were, before he got them. Then he went to booksellers and signed agreements to furnish them with "copy," and wheedled them out of sums on account, loan after loan, till the entire sum stipulated to be paid for his labour was made over to him before he had supplied half the manuscript arranged for. And it is sad to reflect, that when

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Goldsmith had obtained the money, he did not manifest an honourable anxiety to perform the promised work. The hard experiences of his protracted period of poverty, had taught him better than any man in the world, how difficult it was to live, and lay by out of the gains of authorship; how utterly impossible it was to make literary toil supply the means for expensive indulgences, and at the same time to liquidate a heavy burden of debt. Every step that Goldsmith took in encumbering himself with pecuniary liabilities, he took with the full knowledge that he had no reasonable prospect of being able to meet them. And in justice it must be added, that the excuse of poverty, which can be so often pleaded in extenuation of an insolvent's offences, cannot be urged in favour of Goldsmith. His average income from the time of his emerging from penury into a life of wasteful follies and petty extravagances, was one more than ample for his comfortable and dignified maintenance. It was a princely revenue compared with the £20 or £30 a year, on which he lived for several years; it was far more than was requisite for the position of a gentleman, passing a life of lettered ease in the Temple; and it at least must have been six or eight times as much as that on which his pious and useful brother made himself contented, and found means to aid the struggling. And yet Goldsmith, for the sake of flaunting about in smart things, playing high at cards, and clapping down his guinea on all occasions for wine, could voluntarily squander his sufficient wealth, defraud honest traders, and neglect the work for which he had been paid. It will be advanced in his defence that he was very liberal to the poor, and gave often his last guinea to a child of shame whose exhaustion and extreme disease moved his pity, that he was systematically sponged upon by the Irish beggars of Grub Street, that he often in prosperous times visited in Green Arbour Court the old woman who had

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been to him a considerate landlady; and lastly, that he was "naturally unsystematic." And we will not attempt to depreciate the value of these excuses, by saying how little he appears to have done to benefit his poverty-stricken family, with the exception of the ne'er-do-weel nephew, who boldly quartered himself upon him, and extracted from his good nature and vanity that aid which would never have flowed spontaneously from his uncalculating generosity.

Goldsmith is one of those characters whom the present generation has rightly determined to love, and foolishly resolved to cover with unqualified praise. This is very much in consequence of the incidents of his career having been fashioned by one of the first living writers, who affectionately admires his genius and moral disposition, into a biography which is, perhaps, without exception, the most complete and fascinating production of its kind in the entire range of literature. But distinct from the influence of Foster's Life of Goldsmith, there are many causes which have contributed to make the author of "The Vicar of Wakefield," a darling with the public. His well known poetic sensibility to the claims of misery, his heedless Irish impetuosity, and his constant disregard of petty considerations of self when his tender heart was touched, are qualities to make us draw near affectionately to their possessor, even when he is not a man of exalted genius. In addition, in reviewing Goldsmith's career we perceive that he was in all parts of it a victim; in his youth he was the wretch on whom fortune wreaked her ill nature; in his early manhood he had so undue a proportion of suffering and cruel mortification that the heart must be hard indeed which is not pained by the consideration of his position; and in his days of prosperity he failed to extract anything like a fair amount of happiness out of life. He was continually fretting about his dignity; the memory of

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his former degradation was ever at hand to afflict him in his most triumphant moments. "Oh, that is all a holiday at Peckham," innocently exclaimed a friend, using a slang phrase of the period to the distinguished poet. "Do you mean to insult me, sir?" cried Goldsmith, the ex-usher reddening with a fury of passion. His mean appearance and total want of conversational powers put him at a disadvantage; not only could he not command a decent attention from his equals in intellect, but even his mental inferiors did not disguise their opinion, that if he was a great poet he was a greater fool. He was the butt of the club, and in it was subjected to a clumsy bullying which would now be scarcely tolerated in the mess-room of a disorderly regiment. Well, there are few pleasures greater than that to be derived from standing forth the defender of distressed innocence when there is no oppressor at hand to accept our challenge. We magnanimously stand up for Goldsmith, tell Johnson that he did not behave properly to him, Beauclerc that he tyrannised over him, Boswell that he was guilty of absurd impertinence; and having so done we find our hearts beating high with pride at having so courageously put "little Goldy" on his legs, comforted him with our patronage, and vanquished his adversary. Lastly, though men have an insuperable hate to "true heroes," they have an unspeakable fondness for fictitious ones. Bring forward the really great man and immediately every one exercises his ingenuity in discovering and magnifying his failings. But draw the general attention to a character endowed with good qualities enough to interest our admiration, and a sufficient number of counterbalancing bad ones to merit severe condemnation, and you will see him ere long grow into a popular favourite, not for the good of him alone, or the bad alone, but for the good and bad together. We resolve not to be narrow in our judgment of the individual in question, not to fix our gaze solely

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on the bad. This sentiment awakes in our minds a gratifying consciousness of our general elevation and temperance of thought. Pleased with our own generosity, we are even grateful to that which evoked it—the evil; and so in all the charity of self-complacence we go on to bestow our praise on the virtues because they are virtues, and on the failings *because we are magnanimous*.

But the time is come to say farewell to Oliver Goldsmith. Depressed by the gloomy prospect before him, seeing clearly that no alteration he could find courage to make in his mode of life would enable him to get free of his embarrassment, he went on toiling at the completion of his "Grecian History," another abridgement of his "English History," a compilation on "Experimental Philosophy," the "Animated Nature," and the celebrated "Retaliation,"—the satire which was striking with surprise and ludicrous fear, the men who had so long tormented him with impertinences, and who never imagined he had pluck or power to give them such a smart and well-merited castigation. But while he was thus engaged, death came upon him, and he expired, after a very short illness caused by mental disturbance produced by his pecuniary difficulties, in his chambers in the Temple, on Monday the 4th of April, 1774, aged 44 years.

He was interred in the burial ground of the Temple Church. His monument was placed in Westminster Abbey, the Latin inscription on which, from Johnson's pen, does not "disgrace the walls" of that cathedral.

Johnson said of the dead man, "He had raised money and squandered it, by every artifice of acquisition and folly of expense. But let not his frailties be remembered; he was a very great man."

But Goldsmith is one of those distinguished writers with respect to whom a plain line of distinction can be drawn between their private lives and their positions as artists. As a mere citizen, Goldsmith was a blunder; from the beginning to the

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end his life was a failure—a series of unhappy experiences, humiliations, and grave errors; as an artist he was as nearly perfect as it is possible to conceive a poor human being striving to describe an ideal world, too beautiful to be painted by the pauper hieroglyphics of language, to be. He was not a man of commanding intellect, and, though his acquirements were varied, and he had paid some attention to most of the departments of learning, he was on no subject whatever a well-read and profound student. He was an historian, but his histories were elegant popularizations of the important works of greater minds; he wrote much on Natural History, but his pages, interesting and charming from their style, abound in merely superficial views and in ludicrous statements, which prove both the ignorance and the credulity of the author. But he was a true poet; in his warm susceptibilities, irritable, nervous organisation, generous passions, and purity of taste, he had all the principal requirements for the poetic nature. If he was greatly deficient in any quality requisite for a great poet it was imagination; but that failing was more than made up by the depth, and warmth, and constant activity of his strangely delicate feelings. The logic of the head was not his, the dolts of the beer shop clubs he frequented could knock him about in *argument* where they liked; but in the reasonings of the heart there was no other so subtle, so powerful, and so delightful. His sympathies were ill-regulated but they were universal; and his nature, untainted by the sordid filth in which the greater portion of his manly life was passed, uninjured by his own unceasing deflexions from the path of morality, unsoured by the brutal jests and insulting tenderness his coarser associates made him wince under, was from the first to the last child-like, and in nothing more so than his jealousies so ingenuously exhibited, and his vanities so laughably displayed before the eyes of mockers.

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Of his poems it is not our business to speak here critically. Our brief observations must be confined to his novel, "The Vicar." We have to give it praise, almost unqualified praise; but we will begin with censure. The story is bad, the latter part of it very bad; the incidents were the conventional ones of the period, which expected, in the pages of a fiction, young ladies to be snatched hold of by licentious admirers, and carried away to evil houses in carriages and four, in the style of Richardson's heroines; and was not satisfied unless the villain of the plot went through a formal exposure—very effective in melo-dramas—in the presence of the rich parent or uncle who disowns him, the virtuous girl who has eluded his arts, and the triumphant rival who walks over his shoulders into a honeymoon and four thousand a year. Forcible abductions of young ladies were doubtless more common a hundred years ago than now,—indeed in Ireland they have only just been put a stop to; but the novels of the Goldsmith period would lead us to think that the possession of the fair and gentle was as often won by brute force as by tender solicitations. To uphold the goodness of the story of "The Vicar," we cannot; the plot is not only not up to the average standard of the present day, but it falls short of the mediocrity of the time when it first appeared; it is (and ever was) hacknied and conventional, and many of the incidents are awkward violations of common sense, and belong neither to the domain of comedy nor of farce. Some of the characters are very ill sustained. What is Moses? or rather what isn't he? He is the country simpleton, the dolt who is cajoled and cheated into buying a gross of green spectacles at a country fair, and is made the object of the riotous laughter of a noisy young country squire. At first the joke is always against Moses; he is the blundering commonplace simpleton of a secluded farm house. And yet when only just sixteen years old this gentleman is found discoursing

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with his father on the ways of the fashionable world, displaying a "townish" knowledge, and uttering sarcasms which would have made him a reputation in a London club.

"That may be the mode," cried Moses, "in sublimer compositions, but the Ranelagh songs that come down to us are perfectly familiar, and all cast in the same mould; Colin meets Dolly, and they hold a dialogue together; he gives her a fairing to put in her hair, and she presents him with a nosegay; and then they go together to church, where they give good advice to young nymphs and swains to get married as fast as they can."

"And very good advice too," cried I (the vicar) "and I am told there is not a place in the world where advice can be given with so much propriety as there; for, as it persuades us to marry, it also furnishes us with a wife; and surely that must be an excellent market, my boy, where we are told what we want, and supplied with it when wanting."

"*Yes, sir,*" returned Moses, "*and I know but of two such markets for wives in Europe—Ranelagh in England, and Fontarabia in Spain. The Spanish market is open once a year, but our English wives are saleable every night.*"

Marvellous language this for a poor country lad, the butt of a village circle, who had never visited London! Why, if Goldsmith, who had seen the world of London and Europe, had made his customary conversations bright with such sentences, he would have held a much higher position in "the club."

This fault, a very serious one, pervades the entire work. Nearly all the characters break down in some point or other. The unnatural and coarse violence of Mrs. Primrose to her disgraced child, does not accord with the rest of her amiable character. The gradual undermining of Olivia's health, her death, and her resurrection constitute one

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bungle of mistakes. And the Vicar ends a very different person from what he is at the outstart of the story. At the conclusion he is a mere imitation of Parson Adams: his virtues being rendered absurd by their mode of expression; but at the beginning he is a highly-educated gentleman, leading a calm life in the centre of a wealthy and polished circle of friends, an acute observer of human nature, laughing at the foibles of those who surround him; his natural amiability and his philosophical elevation of mind combining to make him regard with amusement, rather than indignation, the weakness of the weak. At the opening he is the teacher, the wise, and the adaptive, who veils the greatness of his powers with an air of rustic simplicity; at the close we pity him for his mental feebleness, and his grotesque behaviour which almost levels him with the buffoon. But the winding-up of the story must not be accepted as an index of Goldsmith's artistic power; it is manifestly a bit of hasty cobbling and patchwork, "done to make a finish," after the uncompleted manuscript had been taken from his hand and sold to the publisher.

The multitude read "The Vicar" simply *as a story*, and were satisfied with it, because it was written by the famous author of the "The Traveller." The more sagacious readers admired it, as a satirical novel of a most original and delicate nature. It was *The Vicar* (not the parson of the winding-up) with his clear insight into the human mind, his polite humour, his large charity, his polished sarcasms—so keen, and yet so void of bitterness; so cutting, and yet so manifestly the language of immeasurable benevolence, that gained the attention, the applause, and the gratitude of the greatest thinkers of the time. It seemed that at last there had been discovered a form of satire that would become the lips of the Christian minister better than the simple and direct terms of exhortation. The highest humour, it was found, could correct and put to shame arrogance, empty pretension,

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unworthy pride, without condescending to anger. The Vicar did not, like many satirists, attempt to frighten men from vice by holding up to their observation hideous extremes of sin, but by creating a purer atmosphere of thought, charming them to better aims, and then turning upon them with a droll smile, and saying—"What! what! could you run mad after such and such?"

"I could not but smile to hear her talk in this lofty strain; *but I was never much displeased with those harmless delusions that tend to make us more happy.*" "That virtue which requires to be ever guarded is scarce worth the sentinel." "My daughters seemed to regard their superior accomplishments with envy, *and what appeared amiss was ascribed to tip-top quality breeding.*" "Conscience is a coward, and those faults it has not strength enough to prevent, it seldom has the justice to accuse." "The creatures I now describe are only *beggars in rhyme.* The real poet, as he braves every hardship for fame, so he is equally a coward to contempt, and none but those who are unworthy protection condescend to solicit it."

Such as the above are the gems of truth which Goldsmith sowed broadcast in the pages of his fiction, and which produce in the reader the sensation of having come where in a bracing and exhilarating air he can look from a hill-top down upon the wide country of life, where in humble labour he has to spend his days. Not that we would have it thought that we give our unreserved commendation to the much-lauded style of "The Vicar." There is often a disfiguring confusion of language, and frequently the blemish is found in the most poetical passages of the book. Take the following beautiful allegory, "Guilt and Shame were at first companions, and in the beginning of their journey inseparably kept together. But their union was soon found to be disagreeable and inconvenient to both; Guilt gave Shame frequent uneasiness, and Shame often betrayed the

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secret conspiracies of Guilt. After long disagreement, therefore, they at length consented to part for ever. Guilt walked forward alone, to overtake Fate, that went before in the shape of an executioner; but Shame being naturally timorous, returned back to keep company with Virtue, which, in the beginning of the journey, they had left behind. *Thus my children, after men have travelled through a few stages in vice, shame forsakes them, and returns back to wait upon the few virtues they have still remaining.*"

Amongst the many memorable lines, and smart epigrammatic sentences, which sparkle against each other in the first portion of the novel, there are several which have long been popular aphorisms, and several of which the author was spoiled by his own friends, or has since been stripped by an ungrateful and pilfering posterity. "O, sir," said the squire, "I am your most humble servant; *I find you want me to furnish you with argument and intellects too.*" On a memorable occasion Dr. Johnson used this pellet of wit, and it often is met with, passing current as of his fabrication.

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CHAPTER XI.

ROBERT BAGE.

Charles Lamb remarked that literature was a very good staff, but would not do for a crutch; and Mr. Douglas Jerrold, putting the stamp of his genius upon an old pun, has said, "let no man be bred only to literature, for literature will not be bread to him." These epigrammatic observations contain a truth which has been acknowledged and acted upon by authors for many a generation. Even of the most famous and successful and industrious writers, only a few have been altogether supported by literature. Either they have been endowed with private fortunes, or they have applied themselves to some more certain vocation than authorship for the means of existence.

Defoe was a merchant and a place-holder; Fielding was a stipendiary magistrate; Smollett and Goldsmith both tried to get fees by the practice of medicine, and at times succeeded; Swift was a beneficed clergyman, then a dean; Richardson and Godwin were booksellers; Sterne had church preferment; Sir Walter Scott was a lawyer with private fortune, supposed worth £800 per annum, and a monied wife, long ere he earned £1000 from publishers. Wordsworth had a lucrative place, as well as comfortable private means; Charles Lamb stuck to his clerkship; and in our times several of the best and most popular writers get the greater portion of their incomes from Westminster, or the dark offices of the city. In the days of Pope, a penniless aspirant for literary honours, either was made wealthy in a trice by getting a government *sinecure*, or died slowly of

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starvation and hunger in Grub Street, unknown—or known only to be visited with vulgar ridicule. In this generation he neither hopes for £1200 per annum from Downing Street, nor, if he be a wise man, thinks there are many chances of his earning secure opulence by his pen, but decently attending to the humble duties of beaverism, either as a barrister or attorney, a schoolmaster or doctor, a clerk or shopkeeper, a tutor or a public lecturer, writes not for money but from love of art, and patiently bides his time, till men shall say, "You are a true poet; and we will have you for our teacher."

Robert Bage was a popular writer, and also an industrious tradesman. He was born on the 29th of February, 1728, at Darley, a village on the Derwent, near Derby, where his father was a paper maker, and, like Fielding's father, had four wives in proper succession. Robert was the offspring of the first union, and after receiving a poor education at a school at Derby, was instructed in the mystery of his father's occupation.

Bred up in the austere simplicity of Quakerism, it was perhaps natural that Robert Bage should, in manhood, have so little respect for persons, and established pomps, as to deride kings, and be to his dying day as thorough-going a republican as Holcroft or Payne. But remarkable it certainly is that a man, reared a Quaker amongst Quakers, and to the last entertaining a warm affection for that decorous and respectable sect, should have been a free-thinker, and have entertained the world with a series of as immoral and flagrantly indecent novels, as the taste of the less refined of his time would bear. To add, in the minds of many, to the contradictory nature of this loose writer and infidel offspring of a Quaker, we may here remark that he was conspicuous for gentleness of manner to all of all degrees, was respected everywhere as a man of the most delicate honour, throughout life was an ever-present help to

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the troubled, and in his own house was a gentle and lover-like husband, a singularly considerate master, and a most affectionate and tender father.

When he was only twenty-three years old, Robert Bage made a prudent and good match, the girl he was so happy as to win being amiable, well-looking, and endowed with good sense, and a handsome sum of money. On becoming a married man he settled at Ilford, four miles from Tamworth, where he carried on the paper factory which was conducted by him to the end of his days. As soon as he was fairly fixed in this position, he looked round for some means of intellectual amusement, and applied himself energetically to the study of the French language, and soon he was able to read with facility not only the romances and plays, but the political treatises also, which were then pouring from Paris into every part of Europe. But he did not present himself to the public as an author till long after his wedding.

In 1765, Bage and three other men (of whom Dr. Darwin was one) took, in partnership, an iron factory. The result of this enterprise was that, at the end of fourteen years, when the partners dissolved their union, Bage found himself a poorer man by as much as £1,500.

It was after this commercial reverse, that he, either to console himself, or with a desire to earn money, commenced a work of fiction. His first novel, "*Mount Kenneth*," was sold to Lowndes for £30, and was published in 1781. In 1784 was published "Barham Downs;" in 1787 appeared "The Fair Syrian;" next came "James Wallace," which was followed in 1792 by "Man as he is," and in 1796, by "Hermsprong, or, Man as he is not."

These novels were well received, and created almost as much sensation in Germany as in England. But there is little to be said for them. They are just such productions as might be expected from a sagacious, clear-witted trades-

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man, who had no mean insight into human nature, and who aimed at disseminating the ultra-liberalism of his political, and the scepticism of his religious philosophy, in fictitious narratives, after the models supplied by Fielding and Richardson. They contain nothing new to serve as a hint to the artist, and their pages are so disfigured with obscenities, that it is a just subject for wonder how Sir Walter Scott admitted some of them into an edition of "Novelists," intended for the use of families.

The close of Robert Bage's life, of simple habits and impure influence, was blessed with honour and serenity. His many amiable qualities, his spotless probity, his unobtrusive benevolence, and his gentle demeanour, secured him the love of a numerous circle of friends, and even in those days of political and religious rancour caused his neighbours to regard with feelings of compassion, rather than detestation, "his unfortunate and horrible opinions."

He died on the 1st of September, 1801, at Tamworth, where he resided for the last eight years of his life. He left behind him a reputation that is already well-nigh dead, a widow, and two sons. Charles, the eldest, who was a cotton manufacturer at Shrewsbury, and Edward, who was a surgeon at Tamworth.

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CHAPTER XII.

SOPHIA AND HARRIET LEE.

In the last century John Lee, the actor, and in some sort dramatic author, did anything but flourish. A man of mean abilities, unbounded self-esteem, many sorrows, and an utterly abominable temper; he succeeded in making himself at one time pitied, and at another despised, by always having a grievance with which to bore the theatrical world in villanously written pamphlets.

The only good thing that is related of him, is that when he was manager of the Edinburgh theatre, he constructed some improved stage thunder in a remarkable manner. He procured a parcel of nine-pound shot, and put them in a wheel-barrow, to which was affixed a nine-pound wheel. He then had ridges fixed at the back of the stage; and when dramatic emergencies required the deep rumblings of Jove, a carpenter trundled the artillery waggon backwards and forwards, over the ridges. The play was *Lear;* and for a time this original apparatus answered well enough, but just as the unfortunate king was in the midst of braving the enraged elements, the carpenter's foot slipped, down he came, and awful was the crash that followed; even yet more awful to the manager was the consequent uproar of the house. The stage being on a declivity, the balls swept down into the orchestra with a velocity as if they had been shot from cannon, and to escape them the venerable king leaped about with astonishing grace and agility. To add to the absurdity of the scene, the prostrate carpenter, unable

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to recover his footing, lay before the crowded theatre, struggling about like a vast toad in convulsions.

After having performed in a great many of the theatres of Great Britain and Ireland, and after having been introduced to many of his country's prisons under circumstances of "temporary difficulty," John Lee died at Bath, in the year 1781, leaving behind him a disreputable name, some barbarous mutilations of some of our best dramatic works, and two daughters, Sophia and Harriet.

Both these women were gifted creatures, and without the advantages of polite education made for themselves an honourable position in literature, and (quite as difficult an achievement for the poor daughters of an unsuccessful actor) a respectable place in the society of that Bath where, at the public and most fashionable assemblies, the master of the ceremonies still commanded gallant gentlemen to desist from dancing, and to lead their partners about "to cool." Sophia had much of the petulant and acrimonious temper of her father, and like him was not ashamed to publish to the world the particulars of her professional jealousies and quarrels. But in her favour it must be allowed that her early education had been neglected, and that she had never experienced those pure domestic influences which are the best aids to the formation of woman's character. The commencement of her life resembled Miss Dorrit's. She accompanied her father into the rules of a prison, and for eight years was the sharer and alleviator of the hardships of his confinement.

Her first appearance before the public in a literary capacity, was in her thirtieth year (she was born in 1750), when Mr. Colman brought out at the Haymarket Theatre, her well-known and very successful comedy, named "The Chapter of Accidents." The proceeds of this play she wisely devoted to establishing herself in a more secure occupation than literature. She and her sister, under the

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patronage of powerful friends, set up a school in Bath, called "Belvidere House," which met with so much prosperity, that at the close of a little more than twenty years, they retired from business with an easy competence which enabled them to reside at Clifton, moving in the best circles of that agreeable place. It may be interesting to the schoolmistresses of this generation to know that Miss Sophia Lee was so ill educated, that she was unable to read a French play.

In 1784, Miss Sophia Lee published the first volume of "The Recess, or a Tale of other Times," and soon afterwards she issued the rest of the work. Some authorities hold this story to be our first historical novel. Unquestionably it is one of the earliest of the school, but, as was remarked in a previous part of this work, Defoe has in our opinion a fair title to be regarded as the father of historical fiction. "The Recess" is unartistic and faulty in the extreme; the facts of history are not treated even with a pretence of respect; and the structure of the tale is very clumsy. Any novel reader who has been nurtured on Scott and Kingsley will be safe to fall asleep in a fair, honest, persevering attempt to get through its pages. Yet we know many elders now living who confess to having read it in their youthful days, over and over again, with enchained interest. And here and there can be found an old gentleman who declares, with a voice of angry defiance, that all modern novels are wretched trash, and that no fiction worth reading has been written since the publication of Miss Lee's "Recess."

In 1796, Miss Lee's tragedy, called "Almeyda, Queen of Grenada," was produced at the Drury Lane Theatre. It was dedicated to Mrs. Siddons, who performed the part of Almeyda, the Queen, and it was a decided success as far as public approbation was concerned; and that being said, the merciful critic would say no more.

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In the next year Miss Harriet Lee, the younger of the two sisters, published the first volume of her "Canterbury Tales," which very generally received, as also they merited, public attention and praise. Of the entire series of those powerful stories, two only were from the pen of Sophia, and they are "The Young Lady's Tale, or the Two Emilys," and "The Clergyman's Tale."

In 1803, the Miss Lees gave up their school, and retired to enjoy the remainder of their days in the enjoyment of their honourably earned wealth. After this relinquishment of her scholastic position, Sophia made two more literary appearances before the world. The first was on the occasion of publishing "The Life of a Lover," in six volumes, a novel written in early life, which, in spite of its length and feebleness, we are inclined to place above "The Recess," because every now and then the reader finds in it scraps of forcible description and effective painting. The last production of Miss Lee's pen was a comedy, entitled "The Assignation," produced at Drury Lane, in 1807. The piece was not so fortunate as its predecessors, for it was only performed once, the public thinking that much of the satire was aimed at popular characters, and therefore naturally evincing displeasure.

Sophia Lee died at Clifton, on the 13th of March, 1824.

Having enumerated the chief incidents of Sophia's literary career, we must now pay the like attention to Harriet. In 1786, she made her *debut* with a novel in five volumes, entitled "The Errors of Innocence," a copy of which we have never seen, and therefore (though the *sequitur* would not strike many reviewers) we cannot pass a critical judgment upon it. And in 1787, her comedy, entitled "The New Peerage; or, our Eyes may deceive us," was performed at Drury Lane Theatre, with satisfactory success.

In 1797, appeared her second novel, named "Clara

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Lennox; or, the Distressed Widow," published on "the subscription plan," which is now, for the dignity of authorship, happily gone out of date. Harriet was fortunate in obtaining a powerful band of subscribers, for in the published list there are the names of the Princess of Wales, ten duchesses, three marchionesses, nine countesses, and a long string of titled ladies, who were well-known in the fashionable world of that period. The book was dedicated to the Duchess of York; and the dedicatory letter to that august lady is so characteristic of the times that we insert it.

To

H. R. H. THE DUCHESS OF YORK.

"Madam,

"As a British subject, in the most ample sense of the word, it is totally unnecessary for me to recapitulate the many virtues for which your Royal Highness is so eminently distinguished; it would add nothing to the present knowledge of society, *nor would it increase that beatified refulgence which those virtues have thrown on applauding myriads.* To merit the plaudits of the good is the strongest sublunary incentive to virtue; and if the voluntary effusions of a generous nation may be considered as a suitable reward, than is your Royal Highness abundantly compensated, since to every degree of merit due to super-eminence in virtue, is added the voluntary and universal approbation of every subject of the empire; nor can Fame confer a more exalted panegyric on your character than by proclaiming that the most estimable of the daughters of Britain are proud to emulate your virtues. But no language is adequate to depict that amiable conduct in domestic life, *which cannot fail to secure the permanency of your Royal Consort's affection.*

"For the continuance of these inestimable blessings,

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accept, most amiable Princess, the devout and fervent prayer of,

"Your Royal Highness's
"Gratefully obliged,
"Most faithful, and
"Devoted humble servant,
"MARGARET LEE."

It may well surprise any one that the writer of this foolish letter was able to produce a series of tales, which have been declared by a competent authority to stand "on the verge of the very first rank of excellence," and one of which was reproduced by Byron in his tragedy called "Werner." Yet such was the case. These tales began to make the acquaintance of the world in 1797, under the name of "The Canterbury Tales." Two of the series, as has been already stated, were by Sophia; but all the others were by Harriet. Byron, who was passionately fond of works of fiction, and could enthusiastically admire the very worst, read, when only fourteen years of age, "Kruitzner; or, the German's Tale," and he was so deeply affected by it that he made it the subject-matter of "Werner," and even used much of its language, verbatim as it came from Harriet Lee's pen. The more unkind of his lordship's judges avowed that his tragedy was very inferior to the lady's novel. Writing from Ravenna, at the date of October 9, 1821, to Mr. Murray, Byron said, "Don't forget to send me my first act of 'Werner,' (if Hobhouse can find it among my papers), send it by post (to Pisa); and also cut out Harriet Lee's 'German Tale,' from the 'Canterbury Tales,' and send it in a letter also. *I began that tragedy* 1815."

In 1795, if not earlier, Miss Harriet Lee submitted a play called "The Mysterious Marriage, or the Heirship of Roselva," a play in three acts, to Mr. Colman, who, after due consideration, declined to place it on the stage; and

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without a doubt his decision was a wise one. For three years the manuscript remained in the hands of the authoress, and then in 1798, she, with the restlessness inseparable from disappointment, published the unrepresented and rejected drama. She would have consulted better for her fame, if she had allowed it to remain in obscurity.

The last of Harriet Lee's publications issued from the press in the year 1826, about two years after her sister's death. Before Lord Byron made the "German's Tale" the subject of "Werner," the authoress had herself dramatised that story. Immediately Byron's tragedy appeared, Miss Lee felt it due to herself to make her own drama known, so that she might not be charged with imitating his lordship's imitation. "The Three Strangers," a play in five acts, was immediately offered (Nov. 1822), to the Covent Garden Theatre, and was accepted. It was not, however, acted till the 10th of December, 1825, when it was received with unquestionable disapprobation, though such a story as it is based upon could not fail to interest. It is written in prose; and there are many who will find amusement in comparing it with the rythmical version of Lord Byron.

On these two ladies it is impossible to look without feelings of respect, and even of admiration. Neither of them married; yet it would be difficult to point to two sisters who are, or were, greater ornaments to their sex. By faithful and affectionate exertions they endeared themselves to their numerous pupils; by persevering and honourable industry they raised themselves from indigence to affluence; and by their genius they produced works which delighted, instructed, and permanently influenced for the better, their generation—as well the most remarkable members of it, as the common herd.

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CHAPTER XIII.

CLARA REEVE.

The writings of the authoress of "The Old English Baron," are so well known, at least by tradition, amongst novel readers, that, bad as they are, it would not be right to pass them over without notice.

By birth Clara Reeve was respectably placed in the middle class, her father and grandfather having in their day been Suffolk rectors. Her father was rector of Freston and Kerton, and curate of St. Nicholas, Ipswich; and her grandfather was rector first of Storeham Aspal, and afterwards of St. Mary Stoke, in Ipswich. Her father, it would seem, did not reside on either of his livings, but, following what was the frequent custom of the time with country clergymen, lived in the principal county town, for the sake of society, and educational advantages for his family.

The Rev. William Reeve, (the rector of Freston, &c., &c.) although he was one of eight children, was blessed with easy circumstances, for, besides his church preferment, he had some property in right of his wife, who was, before her marriage, a Miss Smithies, her father being George the First's goldsmith and jeweller, But the worthy clergyman having just as numerous a family as his father, did not at his death leave a very ample provision for them. Upon his demise his widow, with three daughters, removed to Colchester for permanent residence. Clara made her *début* in literature with a volume of very ordinary poems indeed, published by subscription in 1769. Amongst the subscribers were most of the influential people in her native district of

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Suffolk, and her poems were at the time perhaps calculated to excite provincial interest—certainly no other. The following lines will give a fair taste of the lady's muse.

EPIGRAM.*

"With what glory assemble, what spirit advance,
The militia of S——k, the terror of France!
In their new regimentals they strut and they bluster,
In another three years we shall see how they muster.
Do not think I intend to excite you to laughter,
For a wise man, who knows what will happen hereafter,
Foreseeing their actions, so many, so glorious,
Is now planting laurels to crown them victorious.

Certainly the explanation of the note was requisite to make apparent the point of the epigram. What queer creatures our great-grandfathers must have been to subscribe largely for a volume of such stuff! And they did not fall into the absurdity of such conduct once in a while, but were continually furnishing guineas to stimulate the producers of bad verses.

Miss Reeve's second appearance as an authoress was in 1772, when she put forth under the title of "The Phœnix," a translation of Barclay's well known *Argenis*, to which the fictitious literature of Europe is so much indebted. John Barclay was a Scotchman by *parentage*, but by birth and education a Frenchman. He was born Jan. 28, 1582, and died August 12, 1621. His "Argenis," which was written in Latin, called forth from Grotius a scholarly compliment, in the following lines:—

"Gente Caledonius Gallus natalibus hic est,
Romam Romani qui docet ore loqui."

"The Argenis" had already been twice translated from the Latin into English—the first time at the order of Charles the First, by Sir Robert le Grys and Thomas May; and

* In the year 1798, a gentleman known to all his friends by the epithet of the prophet, was pleading a garden, and wrote to a friend to send him all the different kinds of laurels; he received upwards of thirty sorts, which occasioned the above.

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the second time by Kingsmill Long, in 1698. Miss Reeve supplied the world with a third English reading, and accomplished the task respectably, but by no means brilliantly.

But it was in 1777, five years after the publication of "The Phœnix," that Miss Reeve published a story, which, bad and utterly absurd as it is, obtained a popularity which entitles its authoress to mention in these pages. Mr. Dilly, of the Poultry, bought the copyright of the tale for ten pounds, and published the first edition under the title of "The Champion of Virtue, a Gothic Story," and a second edition under the equally imposing name of "The Old English Baron."

"The Old English Baron, a Modern Story," was succeeded by "The Two Monitors," "The Progress of Romance, through Times, Countries, and Manners," "The Exile, or Memoirs of the Count de Cronstadt," based on a novel by M. d'Arnaud, "The School for Widows," a novel; "Plans of Education, with remarks on the System of other Writers," and "The Memoirs of Sir Roger de Clarendon, a natural son of Edward the Black Prince; with Anecdotes of many other Eminent Persons of the Fourteenth Century."

"The Progress of Romance" was published at Colchester, in 1785, and is a book worthy of perusal, not that it gives correct information, or takes a comprehensive view of the subject, or contains just criticisms, but because it is a good picture of the field of reading open to the novel devourers of that time. The book itself is composed of four prose dialogues, called "Evenings," between Hortensius, Sophronia, and Euphrasia, and commences in the following style.

EVENING I.

"HORTENSIUS, SOPHRONIA, EUPHRASIA.

"EUPH.—Hortensius, I am proud of a visit from you, tho' I am ignorant of the motive to which I am indebted for it.

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"HORT.—What madam, do you think that you can give a challenge, and go off with impunity? &c., &c."

The result is that the trio employ twelve evenings in discussing, in Platonic fashion, the novels then current in circulating libraries, having first made mention of the principal romances and their dates. Euphrasia is Miss Reeve herself, and when the conversation touches on her translation of the "Argenis," that classical personage makes contemptuous allusions to all the critics who have been unkind to "The Phœnix." Besides, the works and writers treated of in the preceding pages, Euphrasia and her friends pass judgment on Mrs. Lennox's "Female Quixote," published in 1752, and that lady's "*Henriette*" and "*Maria*," Dr. Shebbeare's "Marriage Act," in the second edition called "Matrimony," and his "Lydia, or Filial Piety." "The Card,"* a work by a notorious clergyman, *imitating the styles of different eminent novel-writers*, "Pompey the Little," "Peter Wilkins," Mrs. Sheridan's "Sidney Biddulph," Dr. Hawksworth's "Almena and Harriet," and Dr. Langhorne's "Soliman and Almena," in imitation of "Rasselas," Mrs. Brooke's "Lady Catesby's Letters," and her "Lady Julia Mandeville" and "Emily Montague," "Sir George Ellison," "Sir Charles Beaufort," "John Bunde, Esq.," all three published in 1768, "The Fair American, or Emmira," published in 1767, "Lucy Watson," "The Life and Adventures of Common Sense," "Arthur O'Bradley," Mr. Mulso's "Callistus, or the Man of Fashion," Mrs. Cooper's "Exemplary Mother," Mr. Jenner's "Placid Man," Mr. Brooke's "Fool of Quality," and his "Juliet Greville," Mrs. Griffith's novels, "The Delicate Distress," "The Gordian Knot," "Lady Barton," and "Lady Juliana Harley," the "Letters from Altamont in Town to his Friends in the Country," "The History of

* We believe "The Card" was the first of the burlesques of English novel writers.

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Charles Wentworth, Esq.," and a host of other equally forgotten books.

But it is the twice-christened "Old English Baron," which of all Miss Reeve's productions is the only one now at all read; and it is a tale which, to one taking a comprehensive view of fictitious literature is interesting and instructive. The novel had for generations pushed the old romance out of popular esteem, and for more than a century readers of fiction in their delight in studying pictures *true* to life, scorned to be amused by the trifling and mummery of supernatural agencies. A party, however, of which Horace Walpole may be regarded as the head and chief, now rose to proclaim the excellencies of the old romance, and to call once more into use its impossible incidents and unimpressive terrors. "The Castle of Otranto" was published in 1764, and Mrs. Radcliffe's first romantic novel appeared in 1789. Between these two dates, in 1777, (books were not then published at the rate of thousands every season) came forth "The Old English Baron."

The tale was dedicated to Richardson's daughter, Mrs. Brigden, whom the authoress addresses, in the rotund and elegant phraseology of the period, as one "more solicitous to deserve the acknowledgements of a grateful heart, than to receive them." In her preface, Miss Reeve candidly informed the public of the sources from which the story was drawn, as well as the considerations which had influenced her in its composition. It was, to use her own words, "the literary offspring of the 'Castle of Otranto,' written upon the same plan, with a design to unite the most attractive and interesting circumstances of ancient Romance and modern novel." But though in composing "The Old English Baron," she made, to some extent, Horace Walpole's romance her model, she intended to be no slavish copyist; on the contrary, she proposed to take a decided step in advance of her master. It appeared to her that the super-

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natural forces employed in "The Castle of Otranto" were *too extravagant*. She did not object to a little ghostly horror, but it must be within bounds; she was willing to be amused by the *incredible* if she could *believe it;* but such astounding fabrications as Walpole's, no excitement of imagination could enable her to regard for one moment as facts. "*Had the story*," she says, in her preface in reference to the "Castle of Otranto" "*been kept within the utmost verge of probability*, the effect had been preserved, without losing the least circumstance that excites or detains the attention. For instance, we can conceive, and allow of the appearance of a ghost; we can even dispense with an enchanted sword and helmet; *but then they must keep within certain limits of credibility*." Miss Reeve, therefore, confined her imagination to sepulchral groans arising at stated periods, and to remarkable dreams, and, with these exceptions, admitted into her most improbable story no statement that the most prosaic lover of *fact* could cavil at, as being impossible. Strange evidence this—how impossible it is to re-animate the dead bones of the old romance! Here is a writer who was especially interested in effecting the resuscitation, declaring that galvanic effect, let it be attended by ever so much muscular action, would not induce beholders to believe in it as veritable and healthy life,—in other words, that no art could enable the machinery of the old romance to win that support without which every literature must die—the credence and respect of its readers.

More of Clara Reeve we need not say. Ungifted with imagination, or language, or extensive reading, or good taste, she occupies a place amongst *popular* writers of the lowest grade. Her information was scanty, her diction constrained and mean, and the characters which people her pages are no more like men and women, than the cheapest Dutch dolls are like children. That "The Old English Baron" was only *seventy years ago* esteemed by critics an excellent

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work of fiction, and became very popular, are facts that most forcibly declare the advance made during the last two generations in education and general intelligence.

Miss Reeve's quiet and comparatively uneventful life closed in her native town, Ipswich, on the 3rd of December, 1808, in the seventy-ninth year of her age. She was buried in St. Stephen's churchyard, in that prosperous and goodly borough.

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CHAPTER XIV.

HENRY MACKENZIE.

The best memoir of Henry Mackenzie is that written by Sir Walter Scott, who in his grateful affection for the author of the "Man of Feeling," and out of politeness to the old man who was still living, failed to perform honestly his biographic duties, by substituting pompous eulogy for candid criticism, and by indulging in complaisant compliments when there was need of censure. But Sir Walter was a Scotchman, and patriotism compelled him to represent Mackenzie as the equal of Addison, Richardson, and Sterne, just as the same sentiment had induced him to place Smollett on the same level with Fielding, in respect of descent, education, and intellect. Sir Walter, moreover, was something better than a mere Scotchman, he was a man endowed with a large amount of chivalric love and veneration for "the fathers" of his generation, for the men whom a general fair repute, joined to venerable years and decorous manners, distinguished as the "elders of the land." When, therefore, he was called upon, in his young and growing fame, to state his opinion of the literary achievements of the grand old man he had looked up to from boyhood, he was disposed to applaud rather than condemn; and even when his judgment reproved him for the warmth of his praise, he re-assured himself with reflecting, that under the circumstances to refrain from causing pain was the part of good taste, and to flatter was a duty. Still at this date, when Mackenzie has long been dead, and his courteous biographer has long been in his grave, we feel

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that it would have been well had the latter been less extravagantly kind.

On the 25th of July, 1745, the unfortunate Prince Charles Stuart landed in Scotland, and on the 19th of August following, he raised his standard. On that same 19th of August, Henry Mackenzie raised in Edinburgh his first infantile cry, to let the world know that he too was entitled to make a little fuss, and to grumble at men's ways. His parents were of the middle class of society, his father being a Dr. Joshua Mackenzie, and his mother having, as the eldest daughter of Mr. Rose, of Kilravock, some claims to antiquity of descent.

After having received an education at the High-school and University of Edinburgh, Henry Mackenzie was articled to a Mr. Inglis of Redhall, for the purpose of learning exchequer business, a department of the law where as an attorney, he would meet with the fewest opponents to his success. In 1765, he proceeded to London to complete his legal studies. Of course, in the capital he met with friends (what articled clerk does not?) who urged him to give up the thought of applying to the humble vocation of a Scotch attorney, and to prepare himself for the English bar, and the English bench. At first he was tickled with the complimentary proposal, and would fain have acted upon the advice; but his family dissuaded him from so mad a scheme, and he was sensible enough to obey their wise counsels. He returned to Edinburgh, entered into partnership with his old master, Mr. Inglis, and eventually succeeded that gentleman in the office of attorney for the Crown.

Henry Mackenzie went to London in 1765, with some slight literary reputation, for his tragedy, "The Prince of Tunis," was acted with success in Edinburgh, when he was about eighteen years old, in the year 1768. He, therefore, commenced authorship early enough.

After fixing in his native city for good and ay, he was

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for many years as industrious a workman in literature as the demands of his clients allowed him to be.

In 1771, was published his most famous novel, "The Man of Feeling." If success—the success indicated by a publisher's account books, is to be the standard of literary excellence, then, indeed, few better books than "The Man of Feeling" have ever been written. It was seized on with avidity by all classes, and all who read it were delighted with it. It was commenced when the author was in a Shandean fever, and burned to outstrip Sterne. Without any disguise as to who his model was he opened his vapid tale with a scene in which Yorick's manner was broadly caricatured, but which was not illumined by one faint spark of that jester's piquant wit. But the wit of the original was not what Mackenzie wished to reproduce; he only desired to mimic "the sentimentality," the tear-dribbling, the crying over dead donkies. The hero was "The Man of Feeling;" and he must be a strange mortal who would not rather have for a companion the most obdurate ruffian, than that same man of feeling! At that time, however, society was in the very hottest of its admiration for Sterne: and the masses of readers, not such educated and discriminating judges as now, were ready to receive any author with favour who was infected with the universal mania, and honestly did his best to make them weep when there was no appropriate occasion for tears. Mackenzie, moreover, had one fair title to the support of a public taste, daily becoming more refined,—in the moral purity of his pages. "The Man of Feeling" was free from indecent pictures and coarse expressions: good women could read it without suffering the anguish of a blush of shame, and bad ones were content to study "The Sentimental Journey" in their private closets, and in public to declare their admiration of their favourite author by enlarging on the moral book that had just been sent forth by the Shandean school.

The success of this wretched imitation of the worst

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points of a bad model, was so great that it aroused the cupidity of a young clergyman named Eccles, who boldly proclaimed himself the author of "The Man of Feeling." As evidence of the truth of his assertion, he produced a manuscript copy of the novel, in his own writing, with blottings, erasures, and interlineations. The impostor resided at, and was well known in Bath, and it was in "his own country" that he first uttered the lie. For a time his fraud was not suspected, and he was fêted by the wealthy and great as "a man of genius;" but gradually the news travelled to the north, and as soon as Cadell and Strachan (Mackenzie's publishers) heard of it, they gave a flat contradiction to the impudent falsehood, on which the folly of the young man was justly punished by the contempt of all who knew him. His death, however, made amends to society for this act of dishonour; for he perished in the river Avon, while attempting to save the life of a fellow-creature. The *Gentleman's Magazine*, for September 1777, contains an epitaph on Mr. Eccles, beginning—

"Beneath this stone *the Man of Feeling* lies."

Impostures similar to this one have been of frequent occurrence in literature. Many will remember the number of aspirants to the honour of being supposed to have written Wolfe's Elegy on Sir John Moore. And only a year or so ago, a poor simpleton, residing in some mud-fog or other of an English county, proclaimed himself to his parish, the author of Mr. Hannay's excellent sea-novel, "Singleton Fontenoy." Information of the circumstance was by "the next post" conveyed to Mr. Hannay, but that gentleman did not care to give a public contradiction to the absurd pretender.

In 1778, Mackenzie published his "*Man of the World*," which was intended as a sequel to "The Man of Feeling." Unlike its predecessor it is not a copy of Sterne, but is in

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many respects a *discreetly proper* imitation of Fielding and Smollett.

In 1777, his third and last novel, "Julia de Roubigné," was published in a series of letters. The material as well as the form of the work came from Richardson.

In 1776, our author married Penuel, daughter of Sir Ludovick Grant of Grant, Bart., by Lady Margaret Ogilvy. Of this marriage the consequence was a large family, of which the eldest, Henry Joshua Mackenzie, rose to be a judge of the Supreme Court of Session.

At this time of his life Mackenzie was a member of a club composed of some of the most gifted young men of the Scotch capital. On its lists were Mr. (afterwards Lord) Craig, Mr. (afterwards Lord) Cullen, Mr. (afterwards Lord) Macleod, Bannatyne, George Hume, (afterwards Lord Wedderburn), and many other equally celebrated men. It was the custom at the meetings of this club for members to read papers composed by themselves in imitation of the "Spectator." From this sprung the two deservedly short-lived periodical publications, under the guidance of Mackenzie, the "Mirror," and the "Lounger." The former commenced on the 27th of January, 1779, and ended on the 27th of May, 1780. The latter was born on the 6th of February, 1785, and died on the 6th of January, 1787. We have elsewhere expressed our dislike, as a general rule, to revivals, but of all the literary revivals we know of none much more ghastly and unlifelike than these of the "Spectator," under the names of the "Mirror," and the "Lounger." Mackenzie's contributions to these periodicals are as inferior to the papers of the "Spectator," as his novels were to the originals he copied from.

In 1792, Mackenzie wrote several little political tracts, addressed to the lower orders, and urging them not to be led away by the doctrines of the French revolution. In 1796, his pen produced a memoir of Dr. Blacklock, which

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was prefixed to a quarto edition of that blind poet's works. In 1812, he wrote the "Life of John Home," which was published in a separate volume, and also was prefixed to an edition of Home's works. This memoir is interesting to those who care for Mackenzie, as it gives a picture of the literary circles in which he passed his days.

Amongst his several dramatic pieces, were a tragedy, called "The Spanish Father," and a comedy, named "The White Hypocrite," which last was performed at the Theatre Royal, Covent Garden, *once—and only once!* To help the reader to form an estimate of the merits of "The White Hypocrite," more need not be said. The curious may find it in the complete edition of its author's works, published in 1808, through which weary eight volumes we have conscientiously plodded our way. Let no man do likewise.

To complete the list of Mackenzie's writings we ought to mention his contributions to the *Transactions* of the *Royal Society* of Edinburgh, and the *Highland Society*, of both which societies he was an original member. Nor ought we to omit a political tract, "An Account of the Proceedings of the Parliament of 1784," which gained the author the recognition of Mr. Pitt, and which was revised and corrected by that statesman's hand. Some years after the publication of this pamphlet, Mackenzie was presented with the lucrative office of Comptroller of the Taxes for Scotland.

Henry Mackenzie's life was a singularly fortunate one. With poor talents, and no fitness save ambition for the profession of an author, he achieved a brilliant reputation which "lasted out his time," at least in Edinburgh; he enjoyed the intimate society of men celebrated for genius; he married well; he had a first-rate business; his eldest son distinguished himself; and his political respectability, and his infinitesimal political services were rewarded with wealth. He had, moreover, excellent health, and great

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length of days wherein to enjoy deliberately his prosperity. Adored in his native capital as "the last link of the chain which connected the Scottish literature of the present age, with the period when there were giants in the land—the days of Robertson, and Home, and Smith, and Hume, and Clerk, and Ferguson," he died on Friday, the 14th of January, 1831, in his 80th year.

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CHAPTER XVI.

THOMAS HOLCROFT.

On the 10th day of December, 1745, old style, was born in Orange-court, Leicester-fields, London, Thomas Holcroft. His father was a shoemaker, having a shop in Orange-court, where he laboured at constructing the peculiar shoes then worn (for the sake of secure footing) by the chairmen of the town. The business was a poor one, and not sufficient to maintain a string of children belonging to the industrious mechanic. It was necessary to throw out another line to catch fish. Sixty years afterwards, Thomas Holcroft said, when dictating his autobiography in the presence of death, "I have a faint recollection that my mother dealt in greens and oysters."

Take all the miseries of David Copperfield's childhood, make each tenfold more bitter than any that young gentleman experienced, and then multiply their number by ten, and you will, if you take care to banish from your mind every thought of childish glee and frolic, arrive at what was the opening life of Tommy Holcroft. Such privations, such exposure, and such brutal treatment child has rarely gone through, to arrive at length at honourable fame. Most affecting are the reminiscences he had of his early career!

Poor as his parents were, they were ambitious for their children, and Tommy, ere he had reached his sixth year, had learnt not only to read, but also to play the violin, to the great wonder and edification of Orange-court. His uncle John, however, took alarm at the music, and exclaimed "do you mean to make a fiddler of the boy?" The

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British mind has ever had a deeply-rooted contempt for violinists.

Between his birth and the end of his sixth year the boy lived in a tolerable degree of comfort (or discomfort), for his father got by some means money to start as horse dealer and jobber, and so to attempt success in a line of life somewhat above his vocation of cobbler. But Holcroft (father) failed, parted with his property, and went into Berkshire. When people just above the rank of labourers become bankrupts in country districts, they forthwith go to London; and, *vice versa*, London commoners under similar circumstances go into the country.

Lower and lower Holcroft and his family fell in distress. They became pedlars. "My father was so straitened in his circumstances," says Thomas, in his interesting autobiography, "that my mother very soon after agreed to turn pedlar, hung a basket with pins, needles, tape, garters, and other small haberdashery, on her arm, and hawked them through the outskirts and neighbourhood of London, while I trotted after her. I might at first feel some disgust at this employment; but use soon reconciled me to it, as the following anecdote will show:—

"I cannot say what my father's employment was, while I and my mother were, what they emphatically term *tramping* the villages, to hawk out pedlary. It may be presumed, however, that it was not very lucrative, for he soon after left it, and he and my mother went into the country, hawking their small ware and dragging me after them. They first went to Cambridge, and afterwards, as their hopes of success led them, traversed the neighbouring villages. Among these, we came to one which I thought most remarkably clean, well built, and unlike villages in general; my father said it was the handsomest in the kingdom. We must have been very poor and hard driven upon this occasion; for here it was that I was either encouraged or commanded,

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one day to go by myself from house to house, and beg. Young as I was, I had considerable readiness in making out a story, and on this day, my little inventive faculties shone forth with much brilliancy. I told one story at one house, another at another, and continued to vary my tale just as the suggestions arose; the consequence of which was, that I moved the good country people exceedingly. One called me a poor fatherless child; another exclaimed, 'what a pity! I had so much sense!' a third patted my head, and prayed God to preserve me, that I might make a good man. And most of them contributed either by scraps of meat, farthings, bread and cheese, or other homely offerings, to enrich me, and send me away with my pockets loaded. I joyfully brought as much of my stores as I could carry, to the place of rendesvous my parents had appointed, where I astonished them by again reciting the false tales I had so readily invented. My father, whose passions were easily moved, felt a conflict of mind as I proceeded. I can now in imagination see the working of his features. 'God bless the boy! I never heard the like!' Then turning to my mother, he exclaimed with great earnestness—'this must not be! the poor child will become a common-place liar! A hedge-side rogue! He will learn to pilfer! Turn a confirmed vagrant! Go on the highway when he is older, and get hanged. He shall never go on such errands again.'" The father was unquestionably fond of his child, and showing his affection in true old English style, he treated him with a ferocious cruelty, beating him, pulling his hair out by the roots, and dragging him by the ears along the ground till they ran with blood.

Having once taken to the hawking business, they kept to it for years. Holcroft and his boy, with the aid of one or two asses, and in times of prosperity a shambling pony, laden with all kinds of wares, traversed the country. Sometimes, Mrs. Holcroft accompanied them—sometimes she

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retired to a garret in some city in the north, south, east, or west of England, and lived with her brats. "My father became by turns a collector and vender of rags, a hardware-man, a dealer in buckles, buttons, and pewter spoons; in short, a trafficker in whatever could bring gain. But there was one thing which fixed his attention longer than any other, and which, therefore, I suppose he found the most lucrative, which was to fetch pottery from the neighbourhood of Stow, in Staffordshire, and to hawk it through all the North of England. Of all other travelling, this was the most continual, the most severe, and the most intolerable. Derbyshire, Cheshire, Leicestershire, Nottinghamshire, Warwickshire, the towns and cities of Birmingham, Walsall, Wolverhampton, Coventry, Derby, Burton-upon-Trent, Litchfield, Tamworth, Atherstone, Nuneaton, Lutterworth, Ashby-de-la-Zouch, nay, as far up as Warwick, Stratford-upon-Avon, Daventry, Northampton, Newport Pagnell, Banbury, (I well remember its delicious cakes), and on the east, Stamford, in Lincolnshire, Grantham, and in short every place within possible reach, or where pottery might be sold, received visits from my father, the asses, and poor me. * * * * I was not yet nine years old, but I had a variety of employments."

To the child's other afflictions was added that of ill-health, for when about eleven years old, the wretched little wanderer was so oppressed with asthma, that for its relief he submitted to having an issue made on the inside of each leg below the knee; and these issues he kept open, attending to the dressings himself. The treatment was immediately beneficial and ultimately successful. Soon after this, being present at the Nottingham races, he conceived a desire to be a stable boy and take care of a race horse, an employment unquestionably more attractive than that of stocking-weaving, to which he had been for a brief period apprenticed. His endeavours to find an employer had a fortunate

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result. "Mr. Woodcock examined me, asked my age, found I was light of weight, and, as I suppose, liking the answers I gave to his questions, to our very great joy agreed to take me on trial. In the course of my life, there have been several changes, that each in their turn greatly affected my spirits, and gave me advantages far beyond what I had ever enjoyed; of these gradual elevations, this was the first. I should now be somebody. I should be entrusted with the management of one of that race of creatures that were the most admired and beloved by me; I should be well clothed, wear a livery, which would show that I belonged to one of the great; I should not only have food enough, but of that kind which was highly relishing to the appetite of youth; and, in addition to all this, should receive an annual stipend. I jumped, as it were, from a precarious and mean existence, where I could not tell what worse might happen, into a permanent and agreeable employment. I had only to learn to ride, and perform the duties of a stable boy, of which I had no fear, for I supposed them far less difficult than I afterwards found they were."

He had scarcely entered Mr. Woodcock's service, when he was thrown from a horse and nearly killed, for which grave misdemeanour his master discharged him. A Mr. Johnstone next took him into his stables, but quickly parted with him because he did not know his business. His next master was John Watson, with whom he became a favourite, and so signalized himself for pluck and skill in horsemanship, that he was soon advanced to the honour of leading the gallop, and the most vicious and unruly steeds were committed to him.

It was now that he made himself remarkable by earnestly setting to work to educate himself. The book knowledge he acquired before his seventh year, had, during his vagabondage, gradually become less and less, for the Bible and a few ballads were the only literature he had possessed, and

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he had been his own instructor. But he had set his heart on learning. A Newmarket shoemaker, a shopmate of the child's father who had settled just then at Newmarket, lent him "Gulliver's Travels," and the "Spectator." He "liked Gulliver's Travellers ten times the best;" of course he did! "The Whole Duty of Man," and Horneck's "Crucified Jesus," came into his hands and were favourite study. One day as he was passing a church door, he heard the music of a singing class; he stepped in, listened, and evinced so much delight that one of the performers asked him to try his voice. He obeyed, and with such success, that he was induced to enrol himself among the party, engaging to pay the master five shillings a quarter for instruction. Soon he became known in Newmarket as a lad quick at his book, so that a school-master of the place offered to admit him to his school and teach him gratis. But this good man was a drunkard, and every afternoon was to be seen in the streets in such an offensive state of intoxication, that his protégé was ashamed of him, and went but three times to his school. The same man also taught him singing, gave him tuition in the rules of arithmetic, so that he mastered the Rule of Three and Practice, at an outlay, however, of another five shillings a quarter. So in all, he paid out of his little income of about four pounds, two for instruction.

The boys at the stables around and in Newmarket were astonished, and indignant. They spread a rumour that Tommy Holcroft was going mad; Tommy made answer to the charge by being the best rider, as well as the best scholar, of them all.

Ere long he grew dissatisfied with his position, and wished to go to London and obtain more educational advantages. "I despised my companions," he says, "for the grossness of their ideas, and the total absence of every pursuit in which the mind appeared to have any share."

One morning he went up to his master with an awkward

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air, as though desirous to make an important communication, and yet afraid to speak. John Watson said, "Well, Tom, what is the matter now?"

"Oh, sir, nothing much is the matter; only I had just a word to say."

"Well, well, don't stand about it; let me hear."

"Nay, sir, it is trifle: I only came to tell you, I think of going to London."

"To London?"

"Yes, sir, if you please."

"When do you mean to go to London?"

"When my year is up, sir."

"To London! What the plague has put that whim into your head?"

"I believe you know my father is in London."

"Well, what of that?"

"We have written together, so it is resolved on."

"Have you got a place?"

"I don't want one, sir, I could not have a better than I have."

"And what are you to do?"

"I can't tell that yet, but I think of being a shoemaker."

And a shoemaker he was. He was not quite sixteen when he entered a cobbler's stall his father then kept in South Audley Street, and learned his business of a journeyman with praiseworthy industry. Albeit his superiors complained that *his time was idled away in reading*. In 1764, he went to Liverpool with his father. In 1765, he married in that town, and worked at his craft. "But the stooping position required in making shoes brought on a return of his old disorder, the asthma;" and as he hated trade, he made every effort to find out some other employment.

Coming up to London, he entered the family of Mr. Granville Sharp, in a menial capacity—*as a literary servant*. But his patron dismissed him because he persisted in fre-

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quenting spouting societies. Turned into the streets without money, and, consequently, without friends, he was on the point of enlisting in the service of the East India Company, when he chanced to fall in with an acquaintance, who advised him to go on the stage. The advice was taken. Macklin, the actor, engaged him to join a company he was making for Dublin; and forthwith the young man went to Ireland, the capital of which country he reached in 1770. The manager of the company cheated him, and finally discharged him. For a few weeks he acted with another company at Mossop's Theatre, in Dublin; but as he could not get sufficient remuneration from the bankrupt manager, he returned to England in 1771. Immediately he got an engagement with a strolling company at Leeds; but he was not long a member of it, for the association was in great pecuniary and general disorder. He next joined the company of the Kembles, at Hereford, the manager of which was the father of Mrs. Siddons. A difference with old Mr. Kemble occasioned Holcroft to leave this company and join another that performed at Birmingham, and in the North of England. While in this company he married a second time. By this marriage he had two children, William and Sophy; the latter was born in 1775, shortly after which event Mrs. Holcroft died. It was in 1775, when at Cockermouth, that he wrote the following letter to Garrick:—

"Sir,

"I know of no excuse that I can make for the impertinence of this address, but my feelings. They press hard upon me, they are not to be withstood. They have told me that your sympathetic heart sighs for the distressed, and weeps with the child of sorrow. I believe they told me the truth.

"I am a strolling comedian, have a wife and family, for whom I would fain provide, but have sometimes, notwithstanding the strictest economy, found the task a very difficult one. I am now near three hundred miles from London, in a company that must, in all human probability, soon be dispersed; my wife lying in at an inn, and in cir-

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cumstances that I cannot describe. I do not wish to eat the bread of idleness; I neither know, nor wish to know anything of luxury; and a trifling salary would make me affluent. I have played in the country with applause, and my friends, I am afraid, have flattered me; some of them have ranked me among the sons of genius, and I have, at times, been silly enough to believe them. I have succeeded best in low comedy and old men. I understand music very well, something of French and fencing, and have a very quick memory, as I can repeat any part under four lengths at six hours' notice. I have studied character, situation, dress, deliberation, enunciation, but above all, the eye and the manner; and have so far succeeded, as to be entirely at the head of my profession here in all those characters which nature has in any way qualified me for. I am afraid, sir, you think by this time that I have undertaken to write my own panegyric. That, however, is far from my intention; neither do I wish for employment in any but a very subordinate situation. My wife is a good figure, but timidity would always place her behind a queen at your theatre. If you were to find me capable of anything better than an attendant, to your judgment I would cheerfully accede. If you do not choose to employ my wife, but would only engage me, I think we should both remember it with that enthusiasm of gratitude with which good minds are oppressed when they receive favours which they have no possible means of returning.

"I am, sir, your very humble servant, &c.

"Cockermouth, in Cumberland,
"June 1st, 1775.

"At the house of George Bowes, hatter."

At the time of writing this letter he was in Booth's company, where for a weekly stipend of seventeen or eighteen shillings he performed all the old men and principal low comedy characters, was the sole accompaniment to all songs on his fiddle in the orchestra, instructed the young performers in singing and music, wrote out the different casts or parts in every new comedy, and furnished the theatre with several pieces from his own pen (which he never published.)

He now left Booth's and joined Bates's company, and while in it commenced his friendship with Shield, the celebrated composer (then one of the band attached to the company), with the poet Cunningham (a fellow actor), and, whilst at Stockton-upon-Tees, with Ritson, the antiquarian, and author of a "Treatise on Animal Food."

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Before Holcroft left Cockermouth, his wife died.

After years of poverty and wretchedness as an itinera he found himself in London in the year 1777; and af going through countless vexations and sufferings in t capital, succeeded in getting an engagement at the Dru Lane Theatre (then under the management of Sheridan), twenty shillings a week. Ere long his salary was increas to five and twenty shillings, and in 1780, (when he *mad part* of a foolish recruit in "The Camp") to thirty shillin Acting, however, was not his only employment, for he n commenced being author in earnest, in the composition farces and slight after pieces. He also published an elegy the death of Foote, who expired October, 1777, wrote theat cal articles for the "Westminster Magazine," was secret to the theatrical fund, with a salary of £10 per annum, s supplied songs to Vauxhall, amongst which was "Down Bourne and through the Mead." On one occasion Holcr happened to hear a gentleman in the coffee room of White Conduit House, pedantically assert that this popu ballad peculiarly illustrated the tenderness and poetry the Scotch, and that no living writer could imitate it.

On coming to town Holcroft married for a third time.

In 1780, appeared, in two small volumes, his first no "Alwyn, or the Gentleman Comedian," which was not v well received. The "Monthly Review" called it "a vul narrative of uninteresting occurrences." Holcroft felt t criticism keenly, for "cutting up" was not so universal experience as it is now. About this time also he wr under the name of William Vincent, Esq., of Gray's I an account of the riots of 1780.

In 1781, came out at Covent Garden his first come called "Duplicity," the success of which was only remo from a failure by his getting £100 from the theatre fo and something else from the booksellers. In 1781, an 1782, he published a poem called "The Sceptic," and "

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Family Picture," a collection of tales, partly compiled and partly original. In 1783 he went to Paris, where he subsisted as news collector to the "Morning Herald," and literary correspondent to John Rivington, the publisher.

Before leaving England, he committed to Mr. Colman, then manager of the Haymarket Theatre, "The Noble Peasant," an opera, which was accepted, and for which he obtained £100, but its success was by no means complete. Holcroft's next piece, "The Choleric Fathers," came out at Covent Garden.

In 1784, "The Marriage of Figaro," by Beaumarchais, came out in Paris. Holcroft again left England (to which he had returned), went to Paris, and by the assistance of his own memory, and that of his friend Bonneville, carried the words from the mouths of the actors to his rooms, where he put them on paper, and adapted them to an English audience, under the title of "The Follies of the Day." This piece was so successful that Holcroft was rewarded with £600, besides a considerable sum for the copyright.

In 1787, his "Seduction" appeared, and met with great applause; and in 1789, his translations of the King of Prussia's works, in twelve or thirteen volumes, and of the Essays of Lavater, were published. For the former he received £1,200!!!

In 1790, appeared at Covent Garden "The German Hold;" and in the beginning of 1791, "The School for Arrogance."

His next play was "The Road to Ruin," which, says Hazlitt, "carried his fame as a dramatic writer to every corner of the kingdom where there was a play-house." The profits he received from it were in all twelve or thirteen hundred pounds!!! But his good fortune came attended with severe domestic trial. In 1790 his wife died; and in the previous year his only son, and favourite child, on whom he had lavished all the care of paternal love, robbed him of

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forty pounds, ran away from home, and got on board a shi bound for the West Indies. Holcroft immediately got upo his track, pursued him down to Deal, and found him o board the "Fame," Captain Carr, then lying in the Downs Hearing his father's voice, the lad (only sixteen years o age) retired to a dark part of the steerage, and not darin to meet the gaze of his parent, found courage to put a end to his own existence.

In 1792, appeared Holcroft's "Anna St. Ives," a novel in seven volumes. And in 1794, was published the firs part of "Hugh Trevor," the remainder of which novel cam out in 1797. How should we like Dickens to follow th example of Sterne and Holcroft, and allow years to interven between the first and concluding parts of his works?

The year 1794 was memorable to Holcroft, because in i he was incarcerated on a charge of high treason The only grounds for the absurd proceeding were that h was a member of the "Society for Constitutional Informa tion," and was known as a favourer of the revolutionary spiri that had arisen in France. He was confined for two month in Newgate, and was then honourably acquitted becaus there was no definite charge of any kind to bring agains him. But the folly and injustice of his confinement did no prevent him from being vilified by the mean agents of th panic-party. He was stigmatised as an acquitted felon, an avoided by many as one tainted with that horrible and vagu crime—treason. He never recovered in character from th effect of this malevolent and ludicrous transaction. Hi oppressors deprived him of his liberty because he was tha hated thing—a radical; and, having done him that wrong they never forgave him.

In 1794, "Love's Frailties," came out at Covent Garden "The Deserted Daughter," appeared in 1795; "The Man of Ten Thousand," in 1796; "The Force of Ridicule," i 1797; and "Knave or Not," in 1798. After this h

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brought out other pieces, "He's much to Blame," "The Inquisitor," &c., &c., but of his later productions many were either comparative or entire failures; and it is not too much to say, that their want of success may with justice be entirely attributed to political persecution.

In 1797, his father died. Holcroft had always a great love for him, even in childhood when the victim of his violent temper; and he ever, as he rose in the world, cherished and protected him. The old man was buried in Peavor churchyard, near Knutsford, where his son erected a tombstone to his memory, bearing the following inscription: "Here lies the body of Thomas Holcroft, who departed this life in 1797, aged eighty. He was a careful father, a kind husband, and an honest man."

From the 22nd of June in 1798 to March 1799, Holcroft kept a journal, the perusal of which is calculated to amuse, if nothing more. It shows him enjoying the society of Professor Porson, Dr. Moore, Godwin, Rogers (the poet), Colman, Opie, Phillips (Monthly Magazine), Dr. Geddes, George Dyer, Sir William Beechey (the portrait painter), Dr. Parr, Colonel Barry, the celebrated Attwood, Sir Francis Burdett, Erskine, Girtin (the father of water-colour artists), and many others of greater or less repute.

Soon after his father's death, Holcroft's affairs became so involved from the failure of an unwise speculation that he was obliged to sell his effects. Having parted with his books and pictures, he left England for Hamburg in May, 1799, in the hope of maintaining himself there by sending over translations to the theatres and booksellers. Before quitting his native shores, however, he yet once again married, although he was fifty-three years of age. The name of his last choice was Louisa Mercier, the sister of his intimate friend. While at Hamburgh, he visited Klopstock, Voss, Sander, and others; and he applied himself industriously to the study of German literature, with the most important

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works of which he had already formed a familiar acquaintance. Though he was able to see in "that Kant, who is at present so much admired in Germany," no merit save that of "a jargonist," yet his critical judgment must be mentioned with respect for having early discovered and led Englishmen to admire the excellence of Goethe and Schiller.

After remaining a year in Hamburgh he moved to Paris, where he resided two years, occupied in collecting materials for "His Travels in France," which he published in 1804: a work full of information and adroitly communicated anecdote. Phillips gave him £1,500 for the copyright; and the sum was not too great a one. Holcroft began life with hard work, and to the day of his death he did not desist from exertion. He returned to England in 1803, and with his brother-in-law, Mercier, undertook the establishment of a printing-house. But this scheme for making money did not answer, and the demands of creditors necessitated the disposal of the office. While abroad, or after his return to England, he brought out six more dramatic pieces, all of which, with one exception, were successful. The one that was condemned, was his last, "The Vindictive Man." The disappointment was a severe blow; but the very disaster he made use of to grace the dedication of it to his daughter—Miss Holcroft, the once popular novelist.

"To my daughter Fanny,

"To you, my dear, I inscribe this comedy, because you appeared, nay, was partial enough, to admire the scenes, progressively as they were written, and the play, when it became a whole. I inscribe it to you, because you have dedicated your talents, by your literary efforts, to the cause of morality, and have need of that patient resignation to which every writer is doomed. I inscribe it to you, and in this sense to my whole family, with sympathetic tenderness,

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as a solitary testimony of true and ardent affection; as such, I am well persuaded, you will all receive it, though it has been publicly condemned. You will remember the giver; and the gift, though barren, will be welcome."

Besides the plays that have been named, Holcroft published after his return to England, "The Theatrical Recorder," in two volumes, a small volume of poems, "Tales in verse," and the novel of "Brian Perdue."

His health, which for years had been very bad, now completely broke down; asthma and complicated derangement of the digestive organs dragging him into the grave. But the agonies of his frame did not subdue his mind. During the last two months of his illness, when he could no longer rise from his bed, and when every effort to speak was almost convulsive, he dictated the account of his life up till his fifteenth year. The graphic pictures, the calm morality, and the simple poetry of this autobiography, suggest the memory of the last illness of Fielding, who, like Holcroft, endeavoured to forget his death-pangs in application to his art.

The curtain fell on this keen, earnest, and pure-minded man's career on Thursday, March 28, 1809, in the sixty-fourth year of his age. As a pedlar, a stable-boy, a shoemaker, a strolling-player, and author, he had worked—and in each of these vocations had striven heroically. He died poor, but he made many rich!

Throughout life Holcroft was a man of pure tastes. At Newmarket he spent his earnings in acquiring information, and when he became a comparatively prosperous man he never squandered money on vicious or unworthy pursuits. He never gambled or made bets. His favourite pastime was billiards, but he never played for more than a shilling a game; the custom of the billiard-rooms required him to play for a stake. In his house a strict economy was prac-

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tised; wine he took with great moderation, and his fare
every respect was simple. His only expensive tastes w
pictures (on which he fooled away considerable sums) a
horses;—when he was in luck, he always had a high-blood
steed. His political opinions were new to the world, a
therefore terrible; he disapproved of war, he believed in t
equality of man, he loathed tyrants;—but he was of t
philosophic a mind to advise rash measures; loving peace
wished to attain it without war, and his fervent desire
the advent of universal justice made him especially anxio
that the oppressed should not be guilty of doing to th
enemies, as they would not be done unto. But how was
ignorant and selfish generation to understand such a ma
how should people who confounded philanthropy with hi
treason see with the eyes of such a clear sighted one? T
world knew him not;—so the passionate railed at, and t
timid feared, and all wronged him whose life was peac
ful though it was a series of struggles amid storm
scenes.

As the subject matter of the novel is human interes
we find political questions introduced into it at a very ea
date. When authors of fiction turned from love, their fi
topic, to look for other material to work on, they d
covered few subjects that were altogether devoid of politic
relations. Attacks on dissolute country squires, ignora
and oppressive priests, dishonest lawyers, and a thousa
other social nuisances which novelists satirically sketche
were assaults on the established order of things, and there
fore an expression of radical (or in the delicate langua
of our times, liberal) views. Then came the discussions
moral and religious dogmata, the defences of o
established church, and the onslaughts on the Roma
Catholic heresy, that rendered the pages of Fiel
ing, Smollett, and Richardson, so instructive to the
generation. But the first regular political English nove

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fictions that from their commencement had in view the inculcation of certain opinions with regard to human institutions, were those which, for the propagation of these philanthropic sentiments that introduced the French Revolution, came from the pen of Bage,* Holcroft, and Godwin.

What the philosophy of these writers was it is needless to state, for, be it for better or worse, every child amongst us is well acquainted with its tenets. Those who shall ransack in their libraries for "Anna St. Ives," and "Hugh Trevor," on perusing the pages of those books, will find wrapped up in stories built after the models of Richardson and Smollett, many powerful passages, and many expressions of prejudice that will provoke a smile. It was Holcroft's business to lash the vices of the "haristocracy." Usually he performed his task with judgment and adroitness, but now and then his dislike of authorities seduced him into drawing sufficiently ludicrous pictures, his indignation at this day being rather humorous than terrible to look upon.

Here is a characteristic description of a bishop.

"I had scarcely spoken before my lord the bishop entered, and with him as two supporters—Heavens! who? The president of the college where I had been educated; and the tutor, whose veto had prevented me from taking my degrees.

"In the life of every man of enterprise there are moments of extreme peril. In an instant, and as it were by enchantment, I saw myself surrounded by the cowardly, servile, dwarf-demons, for so my imagination painted them, who had been my chief tormentors; or rather by reptiles

* Sir Walter Scott says of Bage, "The general object of Robert Bage's compositions, is rather to exhibit character, than to compose a narrative; rather to extend and infuse his own philosophical opinions, in which a man of his character was no doubt sincere, than merely to amuse the reader with the wonders, or melt him with the sorrows of a

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the most envenomed; with which I was shut up as if I h
been thrown into their den; and by which, if I did n
exterminate them, I must expect to be devoured.

"But these feelings were of short duration. My hea
found an immediate repellent both to fear and revenge,
my eyes. Good God! What were the figures now befo
me? Such as to excite pity, in every bosom that was n
shut to commiseration for the vices into which mankind a
mistakenly hurried, and for their deplorable consequenc

"What a fearful alteration had a few months produce
In the bishop especially.

"He had been struck by the palsy, and dragged one si
along with extreme difficulty. His bloated cheeks a
body had fallen into deep pits; and the swelling mas
parts were of a black red hue, so that the skin appeared
bag of morbid contents. His mouth was drawn awry, h
speech entirely inarticulate, his eyes obscured by thi
rheum, and his clothes were stained by the saliva th
occasionally drivelled from his lips. His legs were waste
his breast was sunk, and his protuberant paunch look
like the receptacle of dropsy, atrophy, catarrh, and eve
imaginable malady.

"My heart sunk within me. Poor creature! Wh
would I have given to have possessed the power of restori
thee to something human! Resentment to thee? Ala
Had I not felt compassion, such as never can be forgotte
I surely should have despised, should have almost hate
myself.

"The president was evidently travelling the same roa
His legs, which had been extremely muscular, instead

fictitious tale. In this respect he resembled Voltaire and Diderot, wh
made their most formidable assaults on the system of religion an
politics which they assailed by embodying their objections in popul
narratives." These observations will apply with equal force to th
novels of Holcroft, and Godwin's "Caleb Williams."

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being as round and smooth in their surface as they formerly were, each appeared to be covered with innumerable nodes; that formed irregular figures and angles. What they were swathed with I cannot imagine; but I conjecture there must have been some stiff brown paper next to the smooth silk stocking, which produced the irregularity of the surface. The dullness of his eyes, the slowness of their motions, his drooping eye-lids, his flaccid cheeks, his hanging chin, and the bagging of his clothes, all denoted waste, want of animation, lethargy, debility, and decline.

"The condition of the tutor was no less pitiable. He was gasping with an asthma; and was obliged incessantly to struggle with suffocation. It was what physicians call a confirmed case: while he lived, he was doomed to live in pain. Where is the tyrant that can invent tortures, equal to those which men invent for themselves?

"These were the guests who were come to feast: to indulge appetites they had never been able to subdue, though their appetites were vipers that were eating away their vitals.

"How strongly did this scene bring to my recollection Pope on the ruling passion! I could almost fancy I heard the poor bishop quoting

> "'Mercy! cries Helluo, Mercy on my soul!
> Is there no hope?—alas! Then bring the bowl!'

* * * * *

* * * * *

"This was a memorable day; and, if the event which I have now to relate should be offensive to the feelings of any man, or any class of men, I can only say that I share the common fate of historians: who, though they should relate nothing but facts, never fail to excite displeasure, if not resentment and persecution, in the partisans of this or that particular opinion, faction, or establishment.

"The dinner was served. It was sumptuous; or rather

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such as gluttony can delight in. The persons assembled, I am sorry to say it, were several of them gluttons; and en couraged and countenanced each other in the vice to whicl they were addicted.

"Dish succeeded to dish: and one plateful was bu devoured that another and another might be gorged.

"Fatal insensibility to the warning voice of experience Incomprehensible blindness!

"I had a foreboding of the mischief that might resul from a stomach at once so debilitated and so overloaded. I wished to have spoken: I was tempted to exclaim—'Rash man, beware!' I could not keep my eyes away from him till at length I suddenly remarked a strange appearance that came over his face; and, almost at the same instant he dropped from his chair in an apoplectic fit.

"The description of his foaming mouth, distorted fea tures, dead eyes, the whites of which only were to be seen his writhings, his—

"No! I must forbear. The picture I witnessed could give nothing but pain: mingled with disgust and horror If I suggest that poor oppressed nature made the most violent struggles, to empty and relieve herself, there will perhaps, be more than sufficient of the scene of which I was a spectator conjured up in the imagination."

In "Anna St. Ives," there are two young men, the one of aristocratic, the other of plebeian extraction; both are highly endowed by nature, and both contend for the superiority, and for the hand of Anna St. Ives. The name of the "snob" is Frank Henley; the *gentleman* is Coke Clifton. Anna St. Ives writes to her intimate friend Louisa Clifton, the sister of Coke.

"Frank and he behave more than usually cool to each other. I know not why, unless it has been occasioned by an incident that happened yesterday. Clifton has bought an English hunter from one of his countrymen at Paris,

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which he was exhibiting to his French friends, whose horsemanship is different from ours, and who were surprised to see him ride so fearlessly over gates and other impediments. They continued their airing in the park of Villebrun, and turned round to a kind of haha, which was both deep and wide, and about half full of water, by the side of which they saw a party of ladies standing, and me among the rest. Frank was with us.

"One of the gentlemen asked whether the horse could leap over the haha, to which Clifton made no answer, but immediately clapped spurs to his hunter, and over he flew. The whole company, gentlemen and ladies, broke out into exclamations of surprise; and Clifton turned his horse's head round, and regained his former place.

"While they were wondering, Frank Henley happened to make it a matter of doubt whether a man or a horse could leap the farthest; and Clifton, continually in the habit of contending with Frank, said it was ridiculous to start such an argument, unless he would first show that he himself could make the same leap. Frank, piqued in his turn, retired a few yards; and, without pulling off his coat or deigning to leap, he made a short run and a hop, and sprung over.

"You may imagine that the kind good folks, who loved to be astonished, and still more to tell the greatness of their astonishment, were manifold in their interjections. Frank, in order to rejoin the company, was obliged a second time to cross the haha, which he did with the same safety and truly amazing agility as he had done before.

"Clifton, indulging his wrong habits, though I have no doubt admiring Frank as much as the rest, told him in a kind of sarcastic banter that, though he could not prove the equality of mankind, he had at least proved himself equal to a horse, to which Frank replied he was mistaken, for that he had shown himself equal to the horse and rider."

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Frank, of course, always gets the best of it, and eventually wins for a bride the high-born Anna St. Ives.

The feud between Clifton and Frank Henley is checked by Frank saving Coke's life—a position very similar to one in Mr. D'Israeli's celebrated novel, where the patrician and Etonians fight it out in so ingenious and interesting a manner.

Let us take leave of Holcroft and his fervid humanitarianisms with that beautiful ballad of his, which has been chanted in every roadside of all England, along which wretchedness has passed.

Ho! Why dost thou shiver and shake,
Gaffar Gray!
And why doth thy nose look so blue?
'Tis the weather that's cold,
'Tis I'm grown very old,
And my doublet is not very new,
Well a-day!'

Then line thy worn doublet with ale,
Gaffar Gray;
And warm thy old heart with a glass.
'Nay, but credit I've none;
And my money's all gone;
Then say how may that come to pass?
Well-a-day!'

Hie away to the house on the brow,
Gaffar Gray;
And knock at the jolly priest's door.
'The priest often preaches
Against worldly riches;
But ne'er gives a mite to the poor,
Well-a-day!'

The lawyer lives under the hill,
Gaffar Gray;
Warmly fenced both in back and in front.
'He will fasten his locks
And will threaten the stocks,
Should he evermore find me in want,
Well-a-day!'

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The squire has fat beeves and brown ale,
Gaffer Gray;
And the season will welcome you there.
'His beeves and his beer
And his merry new year,
Are all for the flesh and the fair.
Well-a-day!'

My hog is but low, I confess,
Gaffer Gray;
What then? while it lasts, man, we'll live.
'The poor man alone,
When he hears the poor moan,
Of his morsel a morsel will give,
Well-a-day!'

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CHAPTER XVI.

CHARLOTTE SMITH.

CHARLOTTE SMITH has more than one claim upon affections. She was unquestionably a woman of gen her life was an unhappy one; and she evinced no ordin courage in the determination with which she faced difficulties which visited her as a wife and a mother.

She was the eldest daughter of Nicholas Turner, E of Stoke House, in Surrey (afterwards the seat of Al side's patron, Jeremiah Dyson) and of Bignor Park, Sussex. She was born in King-Street, St. James's Squ on the 4th of May, 1749; and several of her early y were spent at Bignor Park, on the banks of the Ar which river she addressed in several sonnets, of which following, though not the best, comprehends the m points of interest.

"Be the proud Thames, of trade the busy mart!
Arun! to thee will other praise belong;
Dear to the lover's and the mourner's heart,
And ever sacred to the sons of song!
Thy banks romantic hopeless love shall seek,
Where o'er the rocks the mantling bind-with flowrets;
And sorrow's drooping form, and faded cheek,
Choose on thy willowed shore her lovely haunts!
Banks which inspired thy Otway's plaintive strain!
Wilds! whose lorn echoes learned the deeper tone
Of Collins' powerful shell! yet once again
Another poet—Hayley is thine own!
Thy classic streams anew still hear a lay,
Bright as its waves, and various as its way!"

As a child the little Charlotte was alike remarkable

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her beauty and extraordinary cleverness. Before her tenth year she was a poetess, displayed a correct taste for music, had great talent for drawing, and was never so happy as when she was reading. She was taken from school at twelve years of age, and for some time was the pet and constant companion of her widowed father, who was an accomplished, but frivolous, man of fashion.

She was still a child when misfortune approached her. In 1764, her father determined on marrying again, and a busy-body of an aunt, who had nominally had the education of the child, determined that her darling pupil should never feel the stern control of a step-mother, but should rather taste the tyranny of a husband. Mr. Turner, engrossed with anticipations of happiness from his second wedding, dismissed all care for his child from his thoughts, and offered no opposition to the plans of the scheming aunt. That sagacious lady fixed on a young man, just twenty-one years of age, the second son of one Richard Smith, a West India merchant, and Director of the East India Company, and so unfortunately successful were her efforts that Miss Charlotte Smith was engaged to the young merchant, when she was only fourteen years old, and was married to him on the 23rd of February, 1765.

The story of her married life was a sad one—all the more so from its difficulties having been made over and over again objects of ridicule on the stage. The child-wife was taken from the fresh and lively quarter of St. James's, to a dark and dirty lane in the City, Mr. Smith's place of business. The old man was not a bad fellow for a nabob of those times, but it never struck him that the apartments over his warehouse did not constitute a fit residence for a young bride of aristocratic education and pretensions. He had a rough petulant manner, and felt it his duty to keep his son's "grand little lady" in order, and teach her that she was not to give herself any airs. He was very rude to her

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West-end friends, who in return were not slow to
themselves of a good excuse for not repeating their
east of Temple Bar. So situated—immured in a gl
house, cut off from her old associates, and cowed b
sternness of her newly-acquired parent—the poor chil
ample reasons for shedding tears. Her husband did
to comfort her; he was a mean young man, qualified f
higher position than a tradesman's, but without suf
energy and regularity to make a good subordinate
father.

Old Mr. Smith was an invalid, and had a nabob's av
to cold air. Part of his little daughter-in-law's dutie
to nurse him, and accompany him for rides in the ca
the windows of which were closed though the sun
shining and the heat oppressive. After a time, hov
Mrs. Smith won the affections of her husband's fathe
he evinced his regard for her by allowing her the l
and dignity of a country house. The old man, mor
paid her the highest compliment a genuine merchan
make any woman. He was so delighted with the eff
assistance she rendered him in writing business letter
conducting commercial negociations, that he offered
very large salary if she would consent to reside in Lo
and systematically aid him in his business.

In 1776, Mr. Smith, senr., died, leaving a large pro
and a testamentary document behind him. Unfortun
the will, which was intended to restrain his son from w
the estate and to confer considerable power on Mrs. S
was of his own manufacture, and was so prolix, ob
and contradictory to itself, that no two lawyers ever
to one opinion as to the wishes of the testator.
appointed his widow, his son, and his daughter-in-law
executors, not being aware that his son could experien
legal restraint from his wife in her character of exec
Endless disputes and expensive law-suits were the

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quence of this foolish will. To add to pecuniary trouble and confusion of the family, Mr. Smith persisted in leading a life of extravagance. At the end of about half-a-dozen years after his father's death, and just after serving the office of Sheriff of Hampshire, Mr. Smith was arrested for debt, and conveyed to the King's Bench Prison. His wife accompanied him, and did her best to cheer him during his confinement, which lasted for six months.

It was now, after she had tasted deeply of the bitterest sorrow the world can bestow, that she made her *début* in literature. Her works appeared in the following succession.

"Elegiac Sonnets and other Essays," 1784.

Her translation of Abbé Prevost's "Manon L'Escaut," 1785.

At about the same time appeared "The Romance of Real Life," being selections made by her from "Les Causes Célèbres" of the French.

"Emmeline, or the Orphan of the Castle," 1788.

"Ethelinde," 1789.

"Celestina," 1791.

"Desmond," 1792.

"The Old Manor House," 1793.

"The Wanderings of Warwick."

"The Banished Man."

"Montalbert."

"Marchmont," 1796.

"The Young Philosopher," 1798.

"The Solitary Wanderer."

Besides these she wrote "Rural Walks," "Rambles Farther," "Minor Morals," "Conversations," and "The Emigrant," &c. We have transcribed at length this catalogue of works, to show that Charlotte Smith was an industrious authoress. Some of these books are dull and

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stupid enough, some are respectable, none of them are of a very high order of merit. She would have written better had she written less. But for the haste and want of deliberation displayed in her numerous writings, abounding as they do with much good description and elegant writing, any one who remembers her position as the wife of an embarrassed husband, and the mother of several children, can make large if not ample apologies.

For the last twenty years of her life she lived apart from her husband. A friend also stepped forward to aid in adjusting the long urged claims on the family property, and his exertions were so successful, that ere Mrs. Smith closed her troubled career, she had the comfort of knowing that her children would not suffer under those pecuniary anxieties which had formed so large an ingredient in her cup of woe. Misfortune, however, did not quit her till the last, for death made cruel havoc in her family. She lost, at various times, six out of her twelve children.

At length her sufferings were terminated on the 28th of October, 1806, in her fifty-eighth year, her husband having died in the preceding March.

To this memoir of calamity and endurance of suffering, no better conclusion can be made than by repeating the following simple and pathetic verses from Charlotte Smith's pen:—

EVENING.

Oh, soothing hour, when glowing day
Low in the western wave declines,
And village murmurs die away,
And bright the Vesper planet shines!

I love to hear the gale of even,
Breathing along the dew-leaf'd copse,
And feel the freshening dew of heaven,
Fall silently in limpid drops.

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For like a friend's consoling sighs,
That breeze of night to me appears;
And as soft dew from pity's eyes,
Descend there pure celestial tears.

Alas! for those, who long have borne,
Like me, a heart by sorrow riven,
Who but the plaintive winds will mourn?
What tears will fall, but those of heaven?

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CHAPTER XVII.

FRANCES D'ARBLAY.

Not many years since, in the boyhood of the young ma
of this generation, there dwelt on England's surface, in th
faded fashionable quarters of London, in choice old house
in good suburbs of the capital, at Bath, Clifton, and variou
other towns equally respectable, certain ancient and venes
able ladies of a class no longer existing. They were state
in their head dresses, urbane and overpowering in the
demeanour, and overwhelmingly moral in their epistolar
correspondences. Between seventy and ninety years of ag
they exchanged sonorous letters of polite congratulation
on the little joys, and of pious condolence on the gentee
sorrows, that varied the monotony of their philosoph
lives; of which achievements of their erudite pens, muc
has been conveyed to the unhallowed world by the pub
lishers of memoirs—always amusing, and almost alway
prolix.

The good old times, the flippancy of the present one
the virtues of George the Third, the beauty and grace o
his progeny, the maternal excellence of Queen Charlott
the virulent hatred of *all* order and religion displayed b
the French regicides, the unutterable vices of Napoleon
grave gossip, and stiff pleasantries, such as once constitute
sprightly humour in the royal cottage at Kew, what treat
ment Pitt had adopted for his gout during his last visit t
Bath, and a thousand other equally interesting topics thes
ancient ladies discussed in a sufficiently comic and impre
sive manner. Some of them called London 'Lunnun,' an

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expressed their gratitude in society by avowing themselves to be much obleeged; and whenever they expatiated on the immeasurable genius of Edmund Burke, (which was often indeed) they did so in rounded periods of talk, such as we never hear now-a-days, and the construction of which they had learnt from the Rambler and Rasselas, or the grand utterances of the Doctor himself, at Streatham, or Sir Joshua's. All these highly favoured ones have disappeared (abstinence from wine having preserved the women a generation longer than the men); and now we deem ourselves in luck's way, if we chance to come on an old lady who can boast of having been at school with the Miss Burneys, or who says with a vehement affectation of anger—"I never was more indignant than I was when I was only seventeen years old, and Sam Johnson positively had the assurance to kiss me!"

Of these extinct celebrities—the blue stockings of the last of the good old times, Madame d'Arblay will ever be amongst the most prominent and approved.

Frances Burney (afterwards d'Arblay) was the second daughter and third child of that good and successful musician, Dr. Burney, who was as distinguished in the world by his varied information and delightful cordiality of manner, as he was by his professional skill. Dr. Johnson said that his heart went forth to meet Burney; and wherever the musician went, he made friends amongst high and low. For some years he lived at Lynn Regis, in the county of Norfolk, where he was organist, with a very good salary for his services in the church, and had moreover an excellent business as teacher of music in the town and neighbourhood. He had not resided long in that province, before his social qualities became so known and highly appreciated, that not only did he command the best society in his immediate vicinity, but the houses of the principal aristocracy, for thirty miles round, were always open to receive him.

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It was in Lynn that Frances was born in the July o
1752; and at Lynn she remained till 1760, during whic
year her father bade farewell to provincial seclusion, an
returned to his powerful patrons in London, whom he ha
quitted only because symptoms of pulmonary disease mad
his physicians warn him to fly the impure air of the capita

Taking a house in Poland Street (then a street of goo
pretensions to fashion) he soon brought pupils round hi
and had every hour of his day occupied by the wealthy an
distinguished; and from that time to the conclusion of hi
long life he was a prosperous man;—certainly he lost a wif
he was very fond of, but then he married another whom h
loved full as much; and he experienced the drawback of
large family, but then it was a family of highly gifted chil
dren who did well—one son (James) entering the navy
and after much service rising to be an Admiral; anothe
son (Charles) obtaining the reputation (undeservedly—bu
that matters not) of being a profound Grecian, flourishin
in his vocation of schoolmaster, and leaving behind him
very valuable library which the nation purchased for th
British Museum; Frances rising to be a maid of honour t
Queen Charlotte, and achieving an European fame by he
writings and wit; another daughter (Sarah) distinguishin
herself by the production of novels, not so celebrated bu
as good as her sisters; and some of the remaining girl
making more than good matches.

Very probably the success of the children arose in n
small measure from the instructive and brilliant society i
which they were nurtured, for they were not imprisone
in nurseries, but they were allowed by their indulgent fathe
to mingle freely with his guests, who comprised the mo
distinguished members of the literary, the musical, and th
art circles, and also (on the occasion of concerts at th
doctor's house), the most august of the aristocracy.

As a child, Frances was known to be a terrible litt

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dunce; she would not spell, she would not read, she could scarcely be induced to learn her letters. Judicious friends reminded her mamma of the teaching of Solomon, and urged her to act upon it; but Mrs. Burney replied to these severe counsellors that she was quite at ease on the subject, and was sure that Fanny would do well one day. Not long after this, the kind mother died, and from that time Fanny was left to grow up as she best might, under the genial influences of her father and home. Doctor Burney married again, and two of his daughters were sent to France for an education; but Fanny remained in the paternal house, left to her own ways by her kind step-mother, which ways consisted of close companionship with her father, remarkable amiability to the *little* ones of the family, and a singularly demure bearing to strangers.

Dr. Burney was an elegant verse-writer, and a good (on the subject of his own profession—a learned) author; and seeing him at all spare moments engaged with his pen set Fanny an example which she soon followed. The child took to scribbling; and never lost the cacoethes. The kind papa gave her encouragement; and soon the little stories, she was continually penning in secret, were tolerable specimens of grammar and spelling. The doctor availed himself of her services to make his copies for the press—an employment that caused her much pride and satisfaction.

Years passed on; brothers made their first successful steps in life, sisters fell in love—and Miss Fanny, at the latter end of January, 1778, when she was in her twenty-sixth year, published "Evelina"—a novel in three volumes. Of the history of this book's composition it would be easy to say much, but not much that is true; for the question of the time when the authoress wrote it is enveloped in strange and laughable mystery. It was at one time generally asserted and credited that Miss Burney was only *seventeen* years old, when she composed the tale, which was indeed

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the development of a little story written at an early date, and destroyed from a feeling that it was wrong to gratify her propensity for scribbling foolish stories,—and the world was called upon to marvel at such an instance of insight into human nature in one so young. How this story was first set about it is not hard to conjecture. Miss Burney was already on the wrong side of the critical five and twenty, and she was un-engaged—here was one good reason for her wishing to keep the world in ignorance of her age. Again there was a prejudice amongst young men against female authors; many eligible lords of the creation were afraid of such beings, and tried to conceal their fear *of* them in an affectation of contempt *for* them. It was averred that the softer sex never strove for intellectual distinction, till they knew their personal claims to attention were on the wane; that women devoted themselves to literature, just as their hearts began to yearn to tabby cats, and their faces became wan and wrinkled. Consequently, when Francis was known to have written a book which Dr. Johnson and Burke were delighted with, it was only kind of those nearest to her to say she was ten years younger than she really was, and it was only prudent in her to give countenance to the statement. If such was the origin of the error, we are by no means compelled to charge the Burney family with a life long deception; for doubtless they ere long believed what they had declared,—so great is the power of all to put faith in flattering imaginations, and to be oblivious of disagreeable facts. It is interesting to remark in Madame d'Arblay's memoirs of her father, and in her own memoirs edited by her niece, how vaguely and with what sketchey confusion the story is told of the composition of "Evelina," from its commencement to its completion, albeit the scanty dates are truthfully given.

At last the book was published by Mr. Lowndes, who gave the magnificent sum of £20 for it. The blushing

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authoress, who had communicated with her publisher through the medium of her brother, and who had only generally (and with much effort) informed her father that she aspired to the dignity of authorship, but without communicating the title of her performance, was herself kept in ignorance as to the exact time fixed for the appearance of her novel before the world. She first discovered that the public had made its acquaintance, by a newspaper notice; and it was some months ere she avowed to her family (two or three members of it, who were in her confidence, being excepted) that she was the parent of the "Evelina" who was making so much noise in society. Dr. Burney, either *suspecting* that "the new novel" was the work his daughter Fanny had briefly mentioned to him some months before, or being informed from some secret source that such was the fact, procured a set, and on opening the first volume read with natural and no common emotion, the dedicatory verses in which his affectionate child told him her passionate love for him.

Oh, author of my being! far more dear
To me than light, than nourishment, or rest,
Hygeia's blessings, Rapture's burning tear,
Or the life-blood that mantles in my breast.

If in my heart the love of virtue glows,
'Twas planted there by an unerring rule;
From thy example the pure flame arose,
Thy life my precept; thy good works my school.

Could my weak pow'rs thy num'rous virtues trace,
By filial love each fear should be repressed;
The blush of incapacity I'd chase,
And stand recorder of thy worth confessed.

But since my niggard stars that gift refuse,
Concealment is the only boon I claim;
Obscure be still the unsuccessful muse,
Who cannot raise, but would not sink, thy fame.

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Oh! of my life at once the source and joy!
If e'er thy eyes these feeble lines survey,
Let not their folly their intent destroy;
Accept the tribute, but forget the lay.

The rapid success of "Evelina" made the public curious to discover the anonymous author; and the proud father unable to contain the secret, hurried to Mrs. Thrale's villa, and proclaimed his daughter to be the triumphant unknown. Forthwith the news was conveyed from set to set throughout the metropolis; the journals enlarged upon the intelligence; and Miss Fanny Burney became a notoriety of the first water. Her good looks, her elegant little figure, and the piquant expression of her accurate and delicate features, contributed in no way to damp the admiration of those who were so lucky as to gain an introduction to her. Mrs. Chapone, Mrs. Montague, and all those gifted women, the last receding ones of whom we have considered with more humour than reverence, but with no disrespect, received her with open arms; and Samuel Johnson commenced a violent flirtation with her, that ended only on his deathbed, when in a weak but earnest voice, he implored in French "the little Burney" he loved so much, to pray to God for him. The doctor chuckled over her, smacked his huge lips with the sound of a carter's whip upon her soft pink cheeks, vowed she was a better writer than Fielding, and offered her a thousand gallantries, that were sufficiently grotesque at the moment of their performance, but looked wondrous well the next day, when the fair coquette noted them down in her journal.

In the *Morning Herald* for March 12, 1782, there appeared the following lines, which obtained no little celebrity and approval:—

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ADVICE TO THE HERALD.

Herald, wherefore thus proclaim
Nought of woman but the shame!
Quit, oh, quit, at least awhile,
Perdita's too luscious smile;
Wanton Worsley, stilted Daly,
Heroines of each blackguard alley;
Better sure record in story
Such as shine their sex's glory!
Herald, haste, with me proclaim
Those of literary fame.
Hannah More's pathetic pen,
Painting high th' impassioned scene;
Carter's piety and learning,
Little Burney's quick discerning;
Cowley's neatly-pointed wit,
Healing those her satires hit;
Smiling Streatfield's iv'ry neck,
Nose, and notions—*a la Grecque!*
Let Chapone retain a place,
And the mother of her grace,
Each art of conversation knowing,
High-bred, elegant Boscawen;
Thrale, in whose expressive eyes
Sits a soul above disguise,
Skill'd with art and sense t' impart
Feelings of a generous heart.
Lucan, Leveson, Greville, Crewe;
Fertile-minded Montague,
Who makes each rising art her care,
'And brings her wisdom from afar!'
Whilst her tuneful tongue defends
Authors dead, and absent friends;
Bright in genius, pure in fame;
Herald, haste, and these proclaim.

What a world do these lines introduce us to! And they re not less interesting because they were from the pen of Dr. Burney.

Amongst the distinguished friends Miss Burney made fter arriving at an enviable reputation was Swift's friend,

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Mrs. Delany, who resided at Windsor under the protection of the court to which she had been officially attached. This venerable and imposing old lady, with her massive footman, and in her house hard by the royal door, was the humble friend to whom George III. and his queen were condescendingly kind, just in the same way that most kindly people in the quiet, middle ranks have some old almshouse goodey, or picturesque pensioner, on whom they lavish their benevolence, and display their capacity for a life of Christian humility. Through this lady's goodness Miss Burney was introduced to royalty, and was, in the year 1786, when she was in or near her thirty-fifth year, advanced to the dignity of maid of honour to Queen Charlotte, with a salary of £200 a-year, a footman, and a coach between her and her companion.

The particulars of her career in this exalted position may be learnt by any who will wade through the seven tedious volumes of "Madame d'Arblay's Diary and Letters." Those who, unacquainted with courts behind the scenes, read these seven tomes for the first time, will be strangely enlightened on a few points, and will open their eyes with astonishment at discovering what a life of base servitude and indignity, and of stiff, starch, gloomy stupidity that of a maid of honour is, or may be—at least *was* in the virtuous court of Queen Charlotte. What with clumsy arrogance and ignorant self-sufficiency (such as in these days could not be found in the Claptonian villas of London shopkeepers), inane twaddle given as the best specimens of royal conversation, the petty feuds of the equerries and the ladies, the squabbles of the hangers-on upon the royal establishment, such students will find enough to make them rejoice that their destinies were not cast within the domestic circle of the most illustrious family in Britain.

While Miss Burney remained under the royal roof, her life was a sufficiently wretched one. She had to rise early,

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as to be dressed to the turn of cuff, by the time she
s summoned to the Queen's apartments; and it was fre-
ently late at night 'ere her royal mistress retired to rest,
d set her at liberty. The everlasting dressing and un-
essing—the three daily *toilettes*—were, as she rightly
served, to be called "toil," and no little toil; the long
urs of *standing* in the Queen's room, and the coarse—un-
eakably coarse—treatment she met with from Mrs.
hwellenberg, her superior in office, and the Queen's pet
sociate, made the new maid of honour, who was accus-
med to be caressed in the most polished society of London,
ry dissatisfied with her lot. At first she was much hurt
r the menial character of her position, the being rung for
hen she was wanted, the being sternly regarded by the
ecenly gaze when she was a minute too late (just as she
rself might reprove her own maid for inattention), the
ing expected to receive a new dress because "she wasn't
ch!" Perhaps Fanny thought of the position her own
sid had occupied at home, and contrasted it with that in
hich she herself was placed; and perhaps felt that she her-
lf might have been a more merciful mistress, and saw that
en a servant's ankles are human ankles, and may ache
ith being stood upon, although it is contrary to etiquette
r a court attendant to sit unasked in the presence of royalty.
ut there was a hardship in Fanny's case which made it dif-
r from the lot of those born and reared in servile ranks;
e had to be flayed without being used to it. She had been
customed to her full enjoyment of bed, and now she was
mpelled to rise at six o'clock—just as our Betty has
do—to sweep out our parlour and light the fire; she had
en accustomed to much adulation and attention in society,
en from "the great," now she had to enter a lady's pre-
nce who regarded her, and treated her, with that galling
want of thought" that selfish indifference (far more in-
lting than any direct contumely), which is too often the

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atmosphere in which servants have to pass their lives. It was all well that she checked her impatience by saying, "I am a little nobody—and my mistress is the QUEEN!" the self-reproof was put to flight by the republican sentiment, even through her deep adoration of royalty, "I am a lady—recognised as an ornament to my sex—and Queen as she is, what more can she be!"

But the maid of honour had one great aid towards making such a life endurable: she had an amount of veneration for kings, queens, and princes, indeed for anything endowed with the slightest savour of royalty, that made her at times regard the very curses of her position as blessings. By this happy tendency of her mind, she was enabled to clothe the unattractive exterior of her mistress, with a subtle something—which she called 'queenly grace'—that far surpassed those elements of loveliness which have imprinted the antique Venuses on the minds of all who have beheld them. The "what-what's," and prosy restlessness of good King George's life were the outpourings of an anointed teacher worthy the attention of all future ages; the noisy drunkenness of the Duke of Clarence was princely humour, and the way in which his royal highness clapped the footmen on their backs, demanded more champagne, and ordered in a stentorian voice Mrs. Schwellenberg to hold her potato-jaw, were high-bred pleasantries. It was long ere the timid maiden, verging towards forty years of age, could utter the most brief remark to Her Majesty without a nervous rising in her throat, and when she was so audacious as to prefer some simple petition—that she might take tea with a friend, or have a relation to dinner—it was her custom to get behind the royal chair, so that her confusion on originating a topic of conversation might not be visible to the royal gaze.

Of the adulation which the authoress (timid as she was) found courage to bestow on the queen, the verses written

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on "The Great Coat"—a loose morning jacket Her Majesty used to wear with much satisfaction—may be given as a specimen.

THE GREAT COAT.

Thrice honour'd robe! couldst thou espy
The form that deigns to shew thy worth;
Hear the mild voice, view the arch eye,
That call thy panegyric forth.

Wouldst thou not swell with vain delight?
With proud expansion sail along!
And deem thyself more grand and bright
Than aught that lives in ancient song!

Than Venus' cestus, Dian's crest,
Minerva's helmet, fierce and bold,
Or all of emblem gay that dress'd
Capricious goddesses of old?

These higher honours yet await:
Haste, then, thy triumphs quick prepare,
Thy trophies spread in haughty state,
Sweep o'er the earth, and scoff the air.

Oh no!—retract!—retreat!—oh stay!
Learn wiser, whence so well thou'st sped;
She whose behest produced this lay
By no false colours is misled.

Suffice it for the buskin'd race,
Plaudits by pomp and shew to win;
Those seek simplicity and grace
Whose dignity is from within.

The cares, or joys, she soars above
That to the toilette's duties cleave;
Far other cares her bosom move,
Far other joys these cares relieve.

The garb of state she inly scorn'd,
Glad from its trappings to be freed.
She saw thee humble, unadorn'd,
Quick of attire—a child of speed.

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Still, then, thrice honour'd robe! retain
Thy modest guise, thy decent ease;
Nor let thy favour prove thy bane
By turning from its fostering breeze.

She views thee with a mental eye,
And from thee draws this moral end:
Since hours are registered on high,
The friend of Time is Virtue's friend.

This to Queen Charlotte!—perhaps of all the Queens of England the one, unprepossessing in person (we had almost written 'old frump') though she was, who spent most time on personal decoration! the lady who, instead of soaring above the toilette's duties, wasted daily hour upon hour on the elaboration of a head-dress, as awkward as it was troublesome, and encouraged her subjects in an ostentatious and costly style of costume, when from her exalted position she might, had she set them a different example, have freed them from the cruel demands of fashion, and have, indeed, been the friend of virtue as well as of time. Verily, he spoke falsely, who said that no man was a hero to his valet; and more falsely still, he who said the master was despised by his attendant, because the valet was a valet! For to a great extent, indeed all but entirely, we believe in Madame d'Arblay's sincerity (charitable allowance being made for her inordinate personal vanity); and unless we are mistaken, the homage she expressed and cherished to her royal mistress, in spite of slights, and selfish neglect, was the most genuine of her sentiments, and we also believe that this adoration of Her Majesty (against conviction) was a consequence of her being of the valet-nature. It is true that her flunkeyism—(for *personal* loyalty is essentially flunkeyism, though of the least offensive kind)—was refined from the baser qualities of rank-worship, that it was graceful in its expression, and sinned less against the æsthetic code than the independence of most common

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men does; still no one can deny that, so to bespatter a queen with praise, exactly on points where she merited censure, was conduct only deserving the unpleasant name we have applied to it.

At night the Queen thanked Miss Burney for the pretty little poem, saying, "Indeed, it is very pretty—only! I don't deserve it." This occurred on November the 4th. But on the 6th of the same month, the poetess was in disgrace. "The affair thus came to pass. I walked for some time early in Kew Gardens, and then called upon Mrs. Smelt. I there heard that the King and Queen were gone privately to Windsor, to the lodge; probably for some papers they could not intrust with a messenger. Mr. Smelt, therefore, proposed taking this opportunity for shewing me Richmond Gardens, offering to be my security that I should have full time. I accepted the proposal with pleasure, and we set out upon our expedition. Our talk was almost all of the Queen. Mr. Smelt wishes me to draw up her character. I owned to him that should it appear to me, on nearer and closer inspection, what it seemed to me then, the task could not be an unpleasant one.

"He saw me safe to the Lodge, and there took his leave: and I was going leisurely upstairs, when I met the Princess Amelia and Mrs. Cheveley; and while I was playing with the little Princess, Mrs. Cheveley announced to me that the Queen had been returned some time, and that I had been sent for immediately.

"Thunderstruck at this intelligence, I hastened to her dressing-room; when I opened the door, I saw she was having her hair dressed. To add to my confusion, the Princess Augusta, Lady Effingham, and Lady Frances Howard were all in the room.

"I stood still at the door, not knowing whether to advance, or wait a new summons. In what a new situation did I feel myself!—and how did I long to give way to my first impulse, and run back to my room!

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"In a minute or two, the Queen not a little drily said, 'Where have you been, Miss Burney?'

"I told her my tale, that hearing she was gone to Windsor, I had been walking in Richmond Gardens with Mr. Smelt.

"*She said no more, and I stood behind her chair. The Princess and the two ladies were seated.*

"What republican feelings were rising in my breast, till she softened them down again, when presently, in a voice changed from that dryness which had wholly disconcerted me, to its natural tone, she condescended to ask me to look at Lady Frances Howard's gown, and see if it was not pretty.

"This made me a dutiful subject again in a moment. Yet I felt a discomposure all day, that determined me upon using the severest caution to avoid such a surprise for the future. The Windsor journey having been merely upon business, had been more brief than was believed possible."

The Queen's condescension in asking Miss Burney's opinion of Lady Frances Howard's gown must have pierced her to the heart's core; for any observation from royal lips, directed to her, made her blood leap with exultation. To be informed by the King that she looked bilious made her happy for a month.

"— The King presently said to me,

"'Pray, are you quite well to-day?'

"'I think not quite, sir,' I answered.

"'She does not *look* well,' said he to the Queen; 'she looks a little—*yellow*, I think?'

"How kind to think of *my* body and their looks!".

Wearisome as the memoirs and letters are, they contain many scenes of peculiar interest to the historian and to the student of manners. The former will get a more faithful picture of the *Court* aspect of the trial (or, as the court termed it, persecution) of Warren Hastings, than he can

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obtain from any other source that we are aware of, from the descriptions Madame d'Arblay gives of the Westminster spectacle, and her flirtations in court with Windham, whom her self-complacency induced her to believe, she was winning over to the *right side*. How the courtly, sagacious, cool-headed statesman, whose office in that trial was to keep a check upon his impetuous fellow-prosecutors, must have been tickled by the sentimentalities of the maid of honour, to which he made the most sympathetic, and at the same time most wary replies! Nor will the observer of what is popularly termed 'human nature' be unrewarded for his toil, if he attentively considers the conduct of Miss Burney in the many difficulties of her position; how she kept the equerries in check and broke through the custom of presiding at their tea table (so that she might have her evenings *to herself*), and at the same time was adroit, and bold enough, to attach the two gentlemen of the household, whose society she valued, to herself, and to induce and permit them to enter on outrageous flirtations with her in her private room, day after day and month after month. One of the favoured men was married; the other was a tenderly sentimental soldier, a man of fortune and a widower. This latter *beau* (as men of gallantry were then termed) there can be no doubt Miss Burney did her utmost (considering the *timidity!* of her nature) to annex unto herself, but Colonel Fairly, after he had sufficiently amused himself, and fooled her to the top of her bent, disappointed her hopes by marrying another lady, even as men not seldom do run counter to the expectations of ladies they flirt with.

At length, worn out by the irksome duties and total absence of healthy recreation of her court life, Miss Burney was compelled to resign her post. To such a precarious condition had mental harass and bodily toil (to which may perhaps be added the pains of wounded affec-

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tion) reduced her, that it was the sincere opinion of her physicians that release from servitude, and complete change of scene and occupation, promised the only chance of recovery. Yet even to escape death Miss Burney had doubts whether it would not be undutiful, even impious, to express a desire to quit the royal service. Mrs. Schwellenberg impressed upon her that she ought to stay on, even though to die should be the consequence. After much difficulty, however, she obtained her dismissal; and with a pension of £100 a-year, from the Queen's purse, she bade farewell to court drudgery on July 7th, 1791. "I took," she says, "for the last time, the cloak of the Queen, and putting it over her shoulders, slightly ventured to press them, earnestly, though in a low voice, saying, 'God Almighty bless your Majesty!'

"She turned round, and, putting her hand upon my *ungloved arm*, pressed it with the greatest kindness, and said, 'May you be happy!'

"She left me overwhelmed with tender gratitude." And overwhelmed with reason!—had not the royal flesh positively touched hers, cuticle to cuticle, no film of kid between them? Miss Burney was now thirty-nine years old.

We now enter upon another division, and one more gratifying to observe, of Madame d'Arblay's life. Emerging from the obscurity and torpefying influences of the court, she once again entered the world of active, healthy intelligence, in which her father moved, and was greeted wherever she went by hearty congratulations that she had broken from the chains of servitude. Congenial society, and trips into different parts of the kingdom soon restored her health and spirits, putting her into a humour thoroughly to enjoy the companionship of her sister, Mrs. Lock, and intercourse with the agreeable friends that happily married lady received in her hospitable house. It was during a visit to Mrs. Lock that she was introduced to the

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Chevalier d'Arblay, the adjutant-general of M. Lafayette. The first introduction took place at the commencement of the November of 1792; and such good use did the gallant general make of time and opportunities, that he won Miss Burney's heart, and induced her to marry him, in spite of the prudent opposition of Dr. Burney, on the 31st of July, 1793. The wedding ceremony was performed in Mickleham Church, in the presence of Mr. and Mrs. Lock, Captain and Mrs. Phillips (the two ladies being sisters of the bride), M. de Narbonne, and Captain Burney; and there was a re-performance of the ceremonial on the 1st of August, next following, according to the rites of the Romish Church, as M. d'Arblay was a Papist.

Though prudent friends argued with impressive earnestness against the folly of this marriage which united in poverty two people of different religions, who had both been accustomed to the expensive pleasures of fashionable life, the union was a most blissful one. In a cottage in a secluded part of Norfolk, with a garden in which the retired military officer worked perseveringly and with profitable result; with an income varying between a minimum of £125 per annum, and a maximum of perhaps £400, with a desirable, though very limited circle of visiting acquaintance, with abundance of books and bookish talk, the well-mated couple were as happy as the days were long. Perhaps their years, now fairly placing them in the term of middle life, conduced in no slight measure to enable them to form so favourable an illustration of love in a cottage; the soldier, who had lost a goodly share of worldly honour in the troubles of his native land, was in a position to appreciate, when he contemplated the havoc made in the proud aristocracy of France, the modest security of a country life in England, with an amiable and gifted woman; and doubtless the bride, over forty years of age, after all the hollow adoration of polite admirers, and all the baffled schemes and disappointed

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hopes that must of necessity have marked so long a period of unwedded life, was not sorry to find a goodly gentleman, worthy and willing to become her husband; and when they were once united, the memory of past trials taught them to smile away those little disagreeables which are inseparable from any lot, but so often embitter the young and inexperienced.

During the first portion of her married life Madame d'Arblay was as actively engaged in literature, as her lord was in horticulture. In 1795, her tragedy of "Edwin and Elgitha," an absurd composition, containing three bishops amongst the *dramatis personæ*, was brought out at Drury Lane. Mrs. Siddons performed the heroine's part, but even her acting could not restrain the riotous laughter of the house, or save the piece from emphatic damnation. But notwithstanding this failure, Madame d'Arblay subsequently placed in the hands of Mr. Harris, the manager of Covent Garden, a comedy of her own writing, called "Love and Fashion," and he was so much pleased with it that he agreed to give her £400 for it; but after it had been put in rehearsal the authoress induced the manager to relinquish his right to it, as Dr. Burney was seized with a panic that it should meet with no better fate than that of "Edwin and Elgitha."

It was in novel-writing, and not in any other kind of literature, that Madame d'Arblay was still to meet with her greatest success. In 1796 her third novel, "Camilla" ("Cecilia" was published in 1782) was published, partly by subscription, and she gained by it no less a sum than three thousand guineas. For this good fortune she was very much indebted to the Dowager Duchess of Leinster, the Hon. Mrs. Boscawen, and Mrs. Crewe, who kept "lists," and were active in soliciting subscriptions. It was at this period of her life, some two or three years prior to the publication of "Camilla," that she exerted her pen in advocating the cause of the French Exiled Clergy in an able

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pamphlet. But the great event for many years after her marriage was the birth of her son in the year 1794, who lived to be a comfort and blessing to his mother's old age, although it was her stern lot to follow him to the grave. The boy was christened, and named Alexander Charles Louis Piochard.

The chief incidents of the next score years of Madame d'Arblay's life want of space compels us merely to touch upon. Her residence in Norfolk was constantly broken by short visits to London and Windsor, on which occasions she was always received with urbanity, and even demonstrations of affection by the royal family; but in the year 1802 she bade adieu to that county, and to England, in order to join her husband in Paris, where M. d'Arblay was endeavouring to get a modest pecuniary claim recognized by the first Consul, who would have restored the general to his military rank had not M. d'Arblay declared his determination never to fight against his wife's country. In 1803 his efforts were successful, and he obtained his *retraite* of 1,500 livres or £62 10s. per annum; and in a little time longer he was so fortunate as to procure employment in the civil department of *les Batimens* &c., as a *redacteur*. His post, of course, was no sinecure, his attendance being required at his bureau daily from half-past nine to half-past four; but the work, though humble, was not disagreeable, and it gave him an income which, when added to his *retraite* and Madame d'Arblay's pension, gave him a certain "*warmth*" of condition.

For ten years Madame d'Arblay lived with her husband in France (the greater part of which time was spent in a quiet, cheerful home at Passy), always surrounded by a few desirable acquaintances, and occasionally entering some of the most interesting circles of Parisian society. At length, however, she pined for home, to see her dear old father, to renew those pleasant dinners she remembered to have par-

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taken of in cordial families on the foggy banks of the Thames, and to carry her boy back to his native country, for the sake of an English University education, and that he might be secured from those cruel military conscriptions to which he would soon be liable if he remained in France.

Actuated by these motives she determined on a voyage to England, and after surmounting considerable difficulty with regard to her passport, she went on board an American vessel, which soon after clearing away from the shore was becalmed for two days and nights, and was then, luckily for at least two of the passengers, captured by an English ship, war having been declared during the preceding week against America. Falling by this means into the hands of her countrymen, Madame d'Arblay was speedily conveyed to Deal, from which she and her son proceeded without delay to Chelsea to embrace the much-loved father. But ten years had made a cruel change in the old man!

In the beginning of the year 1814 Madame d'Arblay published her fourth novel, *The Wanderer*, for which she made admirable terms, the worthlessness of the performance being considered, with her publishers. Upon delivery of the MS. she received £500, and two additional sums of £500 each, the one nine months and the other eighteen months after the day of publication. And if 8,000 copies were sold, she was to have in all £1,500 more; but the sale disappointed the publishers' expectations.

Soon after the publication of *The Wanderer*, Dr. Burney died; but the grief consequent on this long-expected blow was alleviated, in the case of Madame d'Arblay, by the declaration of peace between France and England, the restoration of the old dynasty in France, and the immediate presentation of a lieutenancy in the "Gardes du Corps" to Monsieur d'Arblay, who had the good fortune to obtain also from the *restored* (or new) monarch acknowledgment

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of, and advancement to, his former rank of Adjutant-General.

It would be to little purpose to follow Madame d'Arblay through all the rejoicings and gaieties that she entered into in Paris, for a brief period, with her admired general, or to accompany her in her rapid flight from that *not* fickle capital, when the news that Napoleon was advancing at the head of his army, brought consternation to the hearts of tens, and hope to the hearts of hundreds. Separated from her husband who was engaged on military service, Madame d'Arblay spent at Brussels those awful days which were passed there with such philosophic quietude by Mrs. Rawdon Crawley. Soon, however, the storm of the hundred days had blown over; once more Louis XVIII. was enthroned, and the ravisher of Europe's peace and prosperity (!) was sent to his cruel prison.

In the October of 1815, General and Madame d'Arblay, the former with broken health, once more arrived in England; and doubtless the parents were not a little pleased to see again, after the vicissitudes they had experienced during the past year, their son, who was pursuing his studies at Caius College, Cambridge, as a Tancred scholar.

They settled in Bath, and there continued till death parted them; their residence, however, in that agreeable place was varied by frequent trips to London and the seaside, and on the part of the general by several visits to Paris.

In the year 1818, M. d'Arblay's health, which had long been in a troubled state, completely failed, and he died on the 3rd of May, 1818, in the presence of his wife and son. The story of his last days of suffering are not slightly pathetic.

From the opening of the fatal year it was evident to the gallant old soldier, that he was approaching his end; and he began his diary for the year with the following entry:—

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"Jamais je n'ai tant aimé la vie que je suis en si grand danger de perdre; malgré que je n'aye point de fièvre, ni le moindre mal à la tête: et que j'aye non soulement l'esprit libre, mais le cœur d'un contentement parfait. *La Volonté de Dieu soit faite.* J'attend pour ce soir ou demain le résultat d'une consultation."

Madame d'Arblay tried to persuade him that his fears were groundless, but a sterner and a more truthful voice within him contradicted the flattering assurance. At last, after much suffering, which was nobly endured, and after many prayers of earnest and solemn tenderness between the dying man, and his wife and son, the time for parting came.

On the morning of Saturday, the second of May, he opened his eyes, and ordered his servant to open the shutters and undraw the curtains. The prospect from the windows was picturesque, lively, lovely; he looked at it with a bright smile of admiration, and cast his arm over his brow, as if hailing one more return of the day, and light. But when, in the course of the day, something broke from his wife of her reverence at his heavenly resignation, he faltered in reply with a sad smile, "*Résigné?* mais . . . . . comme ça!" and then after a pause he added with a voice of exquisite tenderness.—"te quitter!". The night of that day was passed in tolerable tranquillity, and without alarm. The next morning, also, the patient was cheerful and composed. About noon he awoke from a short slumber and asked for drink, but he was much weaker and could not hold the cup. Soon after receiving the refreshment he desired, he leaned forward from the pillows by which he was propped, and taking Madame d'Arblay's hand, he said with impressive enunciation—'Je ne sais si ce sera le dernier mot. . . . . mais ce sera la dernière pensée—*Notre Réunion!*" They were the last words he uttered; for he peacefully descended into that last slumber of life, without having again spoken.

Madame d'Arblay quitted Bath, and in the October of 1818 took up her residence at No. 11, Bolton Street,

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Piccadilly, there to live with her son who had already been ordained a deacon of the church of England. On Tuesday, Nov. 17th, was made an entry in Madame d'Arblay's diary, to the effect that her royal mistress Queen Charlotte had been taken from her earthly kingdom.

It is now 1820; our authoress is over seventy years of age, and may now be regarded as fairly one of those dignified women of the Johnsonian era, whom we so reverenced in our boyhood. In the October of this year Mrs. Piozzi wrote from Bath. "* * * How changed is the taste of verse, prose, and painting! since *le bon vieux temps*, dear Madame! Nothing attracts us but what terrifies, and is within—if within—a hair's breadth of positive disgust." In 1821, Madame d'Arblay had to lament the loss of this first great friend who dared, after having been intimate with Dr. Johnson, to marry an Italian language-master. Madame d'Arblay's summary of the deceased's qualities we cannot restrain ourselves from inserting, as it is an instance of the Johnsonian magnificence with which these venerable ladies spoke *to* and *of* one another.—"I have lost now, just lost, my once most dear, intimate, and admired friend, Mrs. Horace Piozzi, who preserved her fine faculties, her imagination, her intelligence, *her powers of allusion and citation*, her extraordinary memory, and her almost unexampled vivacity to the last of her existence. She was in her eighty-second year, and yet owed not her death to age or to natural decay, but to the effects of a fall in a journey from Penzance to Clifton. On her eightieth birthday she gave a great ball, concert, and supper, in the public rooms of Bath, to upwards of two hundred persons, and the ball she opened herself. She was in truth a most wonderful character for talents and eccentricity, for wit, genius, generosity, spirit, and powers of entertainment. She had a great deal both of good and not good, in common with Madame de Staël Holstein. They had the same sort of highly supe-

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rior intellect, the same depth of learning, the same general acquaintance with science, the same ardent love of literature, the same thirst for universal knowledge, and the same buoyant animal spirits, such as neither sickness, sorrow, nor even terror, could subdue. Their conversation was equally luminous, from the sources of their own fertile minds, and from their splendid acquisitions from the works and acquirements of others. Both were zealous to serve, liberal to bestow and graceful to oblige; and both were truly high-minded in prizing and praising whatever was admirable that came in their way. Neither of them was delicate nor polished, though each was flattering and caressing; but both had a fund inexhaustible of good humour, and of sportive gaiety, that made their intercourse with those they wished to please attractive, instructive, and delightful; and though not either of them had the smallest real malevolence in their compositions, neither of them could ever withstand the pleasure of uttering a repartee, let it wound whom it might, even though each would serve the very person they goaded with all the means in their power. Both were kind, charitable, and munificent, and therefore beloved; both were sarcastic, careless, and daring, and therefore feared. The morality of Madame de Staël was by far the most faulty, but so was the society to which she belonged, so were the general manners of those by whom she was encircled."

Courted and admired by the rising world of letters, and continually receiving marks of respect and affection from the children of her late royal mistress, Madame d'Arblay lived to a very advanced age. In his diary for the 18th of November, 1826, Sir Walter Scott writes:—"I have been introduced to Madame d'Arblay, the celebrated authoress of "Evelina" and "Cecilia," an elderly lady with no remains of personal beauty, but with a simple and gentle manner, and pleasing expression of countenance, and apparently quick feelings. She told me she had wished to see

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two persons—myself, of course, being one, the other, George Canning. This was really a compliment to be pleased with—a nice little handsome pat of butter made up by a neat-handed Phillis of a dairy-maid, instead of the grease fit only for cartwheels, which one is dosed with by the pound.

"I trust I shall see this lady again."

In 1832 Madame d'Arblay published her father's memoirs, gaining no addition to her reputation thereby. The plan and style of the work are alike bad; the matter was not well selected, and it was dressed up for public reception in the pompous Johnsonianisms in which Madame d'Arblay so delighted in her late years.

On the 19th of January, 1837, Madame d'Arblay lost her son, and only child, who died of a severe attack of influenza, and on the 6th of January, 1840, she herself breathed her last, in her eighty-eighth year.

As a novelist, Madame d'Arblay does not merit a second-rate, or even third-rate, place. Her best book, as she and her friends well knew, was her first—"Evelina," and whatever good qualities it possessed must in a great measure be attributed to the fact, that she trusted little to her powers of delineation, and still less to her powers of conception. Familiar with the writings of Fielding and Richardson, and with the most popular of the French writers, she copied them to the best of her power; and though her imitations were servile and clumsy in the extreme, still they were imitations, and so could not fail to please. As Congreve obtained his early knowledge of life and precocious powers of dramatic authorship from the assiduous study of plays, so did Miss Burney get her familiarity with mankind, and her early capability as a writer of fiction from the careful perusal of novels. Dunlop would fix the plagiarisms of "Evelina" especially in one quarter, but we do not hesitate to say that style, incidents, sentiments, and portions of the

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plot were filched from all quarters—very probably, however, without the knowledge of the authoress. To account for the popularity which "Evelina" attained to, we must remember that the age had not learnt to be fastidious as to refinements of manner, and that the writings of Fielding, Smollett, Richardson, and Sterne had aroused a violent appetite for imaginative prose literature, to satisfy which society had not at its command a sufficient supply of decent writers. Of the morality of this novel (and, indeed, of all the others of this authoress) little can be advanced in the way of eulogy. It is true she did not depict painful scenes of sensuality, but she never has (with all her moral painting) any higher standard by which to measure an act, or thought, than that of social propriety; "the vulgar" was that which moved her bitterest contempt, and "the genteel" was that on which she expended her warmest admiration; and she was one of the first of those novelists (of whom Theodore Hook was the greatest) who earned a degrading *popularity* by pouring ridicule, such as a wealthy and well-fed menial hurls at a less fortunate companion in servitude, on the manners and habits of the class in which their fathers and mothers, and they themselves, were born and bred. The awkwardness, the ignorance, and the repulsive features of all that we understand by the comprehensive and expressive term, "ill-breeding," the being branded by which is the bitterest portion of the common herd, are no fit subjects for sarcasm; the essentially coarse may make them the objects of their insolence, even as ungenerous natures are sometimes found ready to mock the cripple for his personal deformity, but such cruel consequences of the accidents of fortune will awake in a noble breast no harder feeling than commiseration.

In her three last novels, "Cecilia," "Camilla," and "The Wanderer," Madame d'Arblay relied more upon herself for materials and style; and the fruits of this self-de-

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endance are a collection of as stupid, lethargic, and ffected volumes as can be found in the entire library of iction. It is true that "Cecilia" had a great sale, but its uccess followed from the reputation of "Evelina," and its eaders were not so polished and discerning as the public or which the author of the present age has to cater. And is true that "Camilla" put three thousand pounds into the riter's pocket; but when "The Wanderer" appeared, it did o before a new generation, accustomed to far better things, nd the manifestations of public contempt for it were loud nd general. It makes one smile, to read in Byron's ife the note he makes of his publisher having spoken to im of a certain new novel ("The Wanderer"), and the everential timidity with which he adds that *"he shall be ery cautious in venturing an opinion on her whose 'Cecilia,' Dr. Johnson superintended."* Here is a picture of that nviable security, which hedges round an achieved repuation. Byron, in his 24th year, shrinks at the thought f uttering a condemnatory criticism on Madame d'Arblay's Wanderer," because Dr. Johnson, dead and buried an ge ago, was understood to have superintended the comosition of that miserably vapid novel, "Cecilia!" Most haracteristic too, is this avowal of the man whose morbid uspect for the world's opinion drove him into war with it, nd whose anguish under its lashes ever increased as time mbittered the conflict.

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CHAPTER XVIII.

ELIZABETH INCHBALD.

ELIZABETH Inchbald, the accomplished actress and popular author of numerous plays and two novels, was the daughter of a Suffolk tenant farmer named Simpson, of Standingfield, in the county of Suffolk. She was born on the 15th of October, 1753, and when she was only eight years old, her father died, leaving his widow encumbered with debt, to manage as she best could the affairs of the small farm, and a large family, consisting of two boys, and several remarkably well-looking girls.

Norfolk and Suffolk agriculturists are proverbially rich, it being no uncommon thing for a tenant farmer of those counties to possess an equipage fit for the ring of Hyde Park. Even the poorer of the class would be considered wealthy in most other counties. The Simpsons therefore, though embarrassed and in a small way of business, must be regarded as surrounded by many of the refinements which are the usual consequence of wealth. They were moreover Roman Catholics, which circumstance procured them much notice from the neighbouring gentry who were of the same faith. Their visiting list contained upwards of a hundred names, of which many belonged to members of influential and aristocratic families. The girls were in the habit of taking tea with Sir Thomas and Lady Gage, and of receiving courtesies from the Parkers, and Talbots.

As the family grew up, George and Elizabeth conceived a great fondness for the stage. They were in the custom of

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frequently attending the performances, and sometimes the rehearsals, at the Bury Theatre, where they had friends amongst the actors. So enamoured were the brother and sister of all they saw of the life of players, that they resolved to seek engagements from some provincial manager. In the April of 1770, George obtained the much desired post, and Elizabeth vowed she would not leave a stone unturned to do the like.

She wrote to Mr. Richard Griffiths, the manager of the Norwich Theatre, soliciting an engagement; and that worthy gentleman, without committing himself by promising to take an inexperienced girl into his service, so managed his communications with the young lady, that she made in printed characters the following entry in her pocket book for 1770.

E.I.C.H.A.R.D G.R.I.F.F.I.T.H.

"Each dear letter of thy name is harmony."

Not succeeding in the great object of her application to Mr. Griffiths, the poor girl grew unsettled, and dissatisfied with her home. It was hard to be a dairy maid, when she was longing to act the part of a fairy. For the sake of a change she took French leave of Standingfield, and made her way to London, where three of her sisters were settled as the wives of respectable but humble men, one being married to a Mr. Hunt, a tailor residing in a court leading out of Southampton Buildings, Chancery Lane, and the other two being united respectively to Mr. Huggins and Mr. Slender, men in the rank of mechanics. Her sisters treated the run-a-way girl very kindly, gave her a round of the sights of London, introduced her to a Mr. Inchbald—a young actor—who was destined to become her husband, and then sent her back to her mother.

She still cherished hopes of getting an engagement from Mr. Griffiths, and still owned a warm affection for him, although she was fairly in love with Mr. Inchbald, as the following amusing entry in her pocket-book testifies.

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"1772. Jan. 22nd. Saw Mr. Griffith's picture.
28th. Stole it.
29th. Rather disappointed at not receiving a letter from Mr. Inchbald."

At last she found that Mr. Griffith would not do for her what she required of him, and furious with disappointment she, for a second time, eloped from home, and went to London. Having reached the metropolis, she did not go to her sisters, but took every precaution to prevent their discovering her. Anxious for privacy, and full of terror lest she should be ruined in "the wonderful London" she knew so little of, she behaved like a frantic person, changing her quarters from one poor inn to another, and rousing the suspicions of all who observed her wild demeanour. She hoped to get employed in one of the theatres. It was a perilous position for her. Ignorant of the world into which she was anxious to thrust her childish face, very beautiful, not nineteen years of age, and of an ardent temperament, she was just the creature for a victim to sinful passion. Luckily, ere any harm was done, the foolish girl was accidentally met in the street by her brother-in-law, Slender, who took possession of her. She was not packed off to the country, for her sisters were desirous to keep her with them for a time, and Mrs. Simpson gave them permission to do so. Mr. Inchbald now appeared again on the scene, and after fighting a hard battle with prudence, married the young lady on the 9th of June, 1772.

The union was not a happy one. The husband was, at the time of his wedding, 37 years old,—his wife was not nineteen; he was of a suspicious temper, and had led an immoral life,—she was irritable, flighty, vain, and always on the look out for a flirtation. They quarrelled incessantly. Still it appears that in respect of conjugal fidelity, in unfailing attention to her husband's interests, and in the care she bestowed on his illegitimate child, Mrs. Inchbald acted a righteous part.

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Inchbald had a professional engagement at Bristol, and thither, on the 11th of June, 1772, he and his young wife repaired. She now obtained her heart's desire, "an engagement," and on the 4th of September, 1772, she made her first appearance on the stage, in the character of Cordelia, her husband acting the part of Lear. As a girl, Mrs. Inchbald had been oppressed with a distressing impediment of speech; but on entertaining the ambition of becoming an actress, she resolutely set to work to free herself from this infirmity—and by constant practice and earnest endeavours to obtain a clear articulation, she accomplished her object. The excitement, however, of making her *début*, caused her every now and then, during the evening's performance, to hesitate painfully; still, this unpleasant nervous affection was, wonderful to say, at that early date *almost*, and in after years *entirely*, overcome by her continued efforts! She never became a great actress; when she was a favorite performer in London, her popularity was gained more by her piquant beauty than her talents; but her good, sound, common sense, and correct taste, saved her from the commission of blunders.

She was a very industrious woman. Besides attending to her laborious duties in the theatre, she made great exertions to win for herself the education which had not been bestowed on her in childhood. She read every thing that fell in her way, and she used every means to obtain facility in English composition. To follow her and her husband through their professional wanderings in England, Ireland, and Scotland, to accompany them on their imprudent trip of a few weeks to France, and to enumerate all their squabbles, bickerings, jealousies, and rivalries, we have neither the time nor the inclination. The lives of even distinguished actors are, as a rule, far less interesting than the lives of eminent men in any other walk of life; but the lives of the less elevated members of their profession are flat and wearisome indeed.

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The provincial player comes in contact with no remarkable characters; the eternal round of his "parts" can be a matter of no care to anybody but himself—and the exciting facts of his career are entries into different county towns, the obtaining possession of new lodgings, and occasionally the being treated to supper and much grog by some good-natured and convivial patron. The experiences of Mr. and Mrs. Inchbald were common enough; at times they together made comfortable earnings—at times they were poor indeed, and more than once they were glad to stay their hunger with turnips, raw as they were, stolen from the ground.

On the 6th of June, 1779, Mr. Inchbald died suddenly at Leeds, where he and his wife were acting. The young widow was left with her beauty, her talents, and about £350.; considerable riches for a provincial actress. Coming to London, she obtained an engagement at the Covent Garden Theatre, with a salary of £1. 6s. 8d. per week, for the four first weeks, and then £2. per week. Her first appearance on London boards was on the 3rd of October, 1780. In the summer of 1782 she was engaged by Colman, at a salary of 30s. a week; and in the autumn of that year she went over to Dublin, having made an engagement with the well-known manager, Daly. In the May of 1783, she returned to London, and acted again at the Haymarket. In the October of that year, her mother died, only a few months before her gifted daughter was to emerge from indigence, and become a celebrated woman.

In 1784, Colman put her farce "The Mogul Tale," on the stage, which was a success, and not only put money in her pocket, but assured her that, as a dramatic writer, she could earn as much money as she wanted. The following is the list of her plays:—"Mogul Tale," "I'll tell you what," "A Widow's Vow," "All on a Summer's Day," "Animal Magnetism," "The Child of Nature," "Midnight Hour," "Such Things are," "Married Man," "The Hue and Cry," "Next

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Door Neighbours," "Young Men and Old Women," "Everyone has his Fault," "The Wedding Day," "Wives as they were, and Maids as they are," "Lover's Vows," "The Wise Man of the East," "To Marry or not to Marry," "The Massacre," a tragedy, and "The Case of Conscience," a play in five acts. From these plays she gained large sums of money. "Everyone has his Fault," brought her £700, and "To Marry or not to Marry," £600. As an authoress she was better paid than she was as an actress on the stage, from which she retired in 1789.

Besides the above dramatic works she wrote two novels. The first, called a "Simple Story," was published on the 10th of February, 1791, by Robinson, who bought a portion of the copyright for £200. The second, "Nature and Art," a title which Mr. Thornbury's brilliant "Art and Nature," has made familiar to our ears, was published in 1796, also by Robinson, who gave her for part of the copyright, £150. These tales are still so well known to novel readers, that we will say little about them. The "Simple Story" is really two distinct novels, and very remarkable ones too. Of course they are not up to the present standard of art, and are very faulty productions when set side by side with "Jane Eyre," and "John Halifax;" but we do not hesitate to say that the "Simple Story," and "Nature and Art," are far superior to any prose fiction produced by a female pen previous to their appearance. They abound in striking scenes, powerful writing, and effective sarcasm. No educated person can read them without being painfully alive to their defects; yet no one will peruse twenty pages of either, without being enchained, even against his will, and being compelled to acknowledge the author gifted with no ordinary strength. It is to be regretted that they are slightly tinctured with the coarseness of the last century. They are not immoral; in strict justice, they do not even deserve so harsh an epithet as "indelicate." Perhaps we shall best express

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their failing by describing them as containing nothing calculated to raise a blush of shame on the cheek of a married woman.

Worldly success had no ill effects on Mrs. Inchbald. In her opulence she was the same industrious, thrifty, unpretending woman that she had been in her poverty.

Strictly economical, perhaps penuriously so, in her own expenses, she gave liberally to her numerous poor relations, and encouraged them to approach her, and was proud to acknowledge them in the presence of her most distinguished acquaintance. Men of rank and wealth paid assiduous court to her, in the hope to make her beauty minister to their pleasures, but she preserved her womanly honour, though her vanity was by such attentions raised to a pitch of madness. Her beauty was of the kind that is said "to wear well," and it was still in its bloom, when most women are in "the yellow sere." When she was quite in her latter days, she was earnestly sought in marriage by a young, a brilliant, and well-endowed man, of whom she was passionately fond, but it would seem that she was too generous to avail herself of his rash entreaty.

It is to be feared, that she was so good a Catholic as to leave the charge of her soul altogether to the church, for it is clear by the following extract from her diary, she was not in the habit of paying much attention to her devotional duties. "March 18th——Began to say my prayers." But if she cared too much for the world, she did not allow its vanities to dispel the simplicity and genuine frankness of her nature. She liked good company, but she liked her early habits of humble industry quite as well. Writing to a friend, she says, "I have been very ill indeed, and looked even worse than I was; but since the weather has permitted me to leave off making my fire, scouring the grate, sifting the cinders, and all the *et cæteras* of going up and down three pair of long stairs with water or dirt, I feel quite another

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creature; and it is my intention never again to hazard the greatest blessing God in his mercy can bestow, *health*, for any other enjoyment. Still I will not allow but that I am both able and willing to perform hard bodily labour; but then the fatigue of being a fine lady the remaining part of the day is too much for any common strength.

"Last Thursday morning I finished scouring my bedchamber, while a coach with a coronet and two footmen waited at the door to take me an airing."

In 1810, she again sold the copyright of her novels. On this occasion Messrs. Longman and Co. were the purchasers, and she twice bought stock with the money paid her on that account by that house.

The concluding years of Mrs. Inchbald's life were not free from the signs of decay usual in an advanced age, but to the last she was much sought after and admired by society. She died a zealous Catholic at Kensington, after a short illness, on the 1st of August, 1821, aged 67 years. Her old friend, Mrs. Piozzi, had expired a few months before.

Mrs. Inchbald left a property which, invested in the funds, produced an annual income of £260 5*s*. Her will, which disposed of this estate, was one which expressed the justice and goodness of her nature. To Robert Inchbald (the illegitimate son of her husband), who had behaved to her with great ingratitude, she left £20 per annum.

She was buried in the churchyard of Kensington.

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CHAPTER XIX.

MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT GODWIN.

THOUGH Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin is, as a novelist, of no especial interest to the student of modern literature, it is nevertheless fit to glance in these pages at her career, as it intimately affected one whom we shall have to consider with attention. Moreover, apart from her relation to this object of her care, she is a character worthy of record and study, for her virtues, her misfortunes, and her grave errors may instruct us not less than they appeal to our sympathies. Prominent amongst those women who have dared to battle with public opinion, and to rebel against those social rules that weigh with peculiar severity on the gentler sex, stands Mary Wollstonecraft. To fight the world on the score of its favourite views, is to fight a strong army; and the bold champion of innovation who engages in such a warfare, even when he is a powerful man, must ever attract some portion of the admiration of the generous and brave; much more must this be the case, when the single combatant who advances against the mighty host is a woman.

Edward John Wollstonecraft (the father of Mary) was the son of a respectable manufacturer of Spitalfields, from whom he inherited a property somewhat less than £10,000. Not bred to any profession, he married a Miss Elizabeth Dixon (of the Dixons of Ballyshannon in Ireland), and occupied himself—first as a farmer, then as a commercial man, and finally as a broken-down dependent on his clever child. He had several children, five of whom survived Mary; and

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the fact of his numerous progeny having been stated, all has been said that can be advanced in his honour; for he was a selfish, passionate, and cruel tyrant, finding more pleasure in flogging his children and dogs than in anything else, unless beating his wife is to be excepted. To make the brutality of this social ogre stand out in its utmost repulsiveness, occasional fits of tenderness would seize him, during which he would hang over his victims, caressing them with maudlin fondness.

Mrs. Wollstonecraft appears to have been not altogether free from her husband's failings, and in the case of Mary (who was not her darling child) to have encouraged rather than restrained his cruelty. This may appear a slight circumstance to many; but we cannot deem it devoid of interest, that the woman who vehemently and too rancorously proclaimed it her mission to expose the social tyranny of the strong over the weak, was in childhood drilled with hardiness, and bullied into discontent and rebellion. When reviewing the earlier years of her life she told Godwin that her father's chastisements never humbled her or cowed her, but roused her to express contempt for him.

The child not only used to take with this spirit the blows that were intended for her, but by interposing herself at critical moments between her father and mother she would receive the blows directed against the latter; and on occasions when she feared an outbreak of this violent man's temper, she would lay all night long on the landing, at his bed-room door, ready on a moment's alarm to rush in and protect her mother.

Mary was born either in London, or in the Epping Forest, on the 27th of April, 1759. In her fifth year her father moved to another house in the forest, taking a farm a little way removed from the Chelmsford Road. In the Michaelmas of 1765, the family changed their quarters again,—and this time for a convenient house in Barking,

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Essex. While in this residence, the Wollstonecrafts were the intimate friends, as well as neighbours, of Bamber Gascoigne, M.P., for several boroughs in succession, and his brother Joseph. But they were rolling stones; and in Michaelmas, 1768, Mr. Wollstonecraft carried his wife and children off to Yorkshire, where he had taken a farm, near Beverley. Farming however did not answer, or at least not sufficiently well to compose the restlessness of his disposition, for after a lapse of a few years (from five to seven) he gave up the pursuits of agriculture, came up to London, put his family in a house in Queen's Row, in Hoxton, and entered into some commercial speculation which, after a trial of a year and a half, turned out so unfortunately that he went back to his former employment of tiller of the soil.

With this year and half of residence in Hoxton commences the history of Mary Wollstonecraft's womanhood. She is now sixteen or seventeen years of age. The tears and sufferings of childhood have not prevented the growth and graceful development of her form. In her animated face is a fresh colour, and an intelligent beauty; perhaps the eyes flash out somewhat too frequently, with a faint touch of the paternal fierceness, but that defect is quite overcome by the feminine gentleness of her features, by the pretty lips—slightly pursed forwards, and by her radiant smiles. Perhaps her voice is rather too loud in the family councils, and she is a little too indignant when opposed, but then there is such *musical* good nature in her words, and such *hearty* good nature in all her acts, that surely it is right that her brothers and sisters should knock under to her. Without a doubt, if Opie's artistic powers are to be taken as evidence, few women had such a large share of personal beauty, of the most intellectual and at the same time truly *feminine*, style as had Mary Wollstonecraft.

The young lady now began to form friendships with all

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the ardour of a high-spirited girl. A certain Mr. Clare, an odd little old clergyman, very much like Pope in stature and appearance, possessed of considerable mental cultivation, but morbidly eccentric—scarcely ever leaving his drawing-room, and wearing one pair of shoes (his only pair) for fourteen years, made acquaintance with Mary, and the two became very intimate. Mrs. Clare (the wife of this single-shod recluse) also conceived a great liking for Mary, and introduced her to a Miss Frances Blood, of Newington Butts, of course a very delightful young lady, or Mary would not have loved her, and admired her, and vowed eternal devotion to her, and all that kind of thing as she did. Once friends, always friends, said these enthusiastic and romantic girls; they would always be true to each other—and strange to say, they were!

Fanny Blood was, in sober language, no common girl; for she was an accomplished musician, and had such command of her pencil that she contrived to maintain by its exercise her father, mother, and a family of brothers and sisters. In other respects also she was well educated, and undertook to give instruction to Mary, whose spelling was at this time very faulty, and whose stock of information was little more than what she had been able to pick up in the various day-schools to which she had been sent.

But scarcely had these connections been formed, when Mr. Wollstonecraft left Hoxton, to try agriculture, once more, in Wales. Mary of course went with the rest of the family, but with no great good-will to the change. The separation however from her London friends was not a long one, for soon after the expiration of a year the Welsh scheme was deserted, and the family took up their abode in Walworth, so that Mary was restored to Fanny.

Mary is now nineteen years of age, no longer to be regarded as a child, and she sighs for the independence of a woman. Her home is no pleasant one, indeed what Charles

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Lamb would have called *so* home at all; the furious temper of the master of the house makes every one wretched; his wife whines and frets and scolds; the young ones clamour for money for educational purposes and can get none; nothing goes prosperously. Mary is constantly doing her best to make matters better, and as incessantly is meeting with curses for her pains instead of thanks, till she becomes a volcano of indignation.

Oh, if she could but be independent! if she might only be a governess! she exclaims. Father and mother cannot hear of such a thing; the latter bursting into tears, and the former rating the girl soundly for being anxious to take so wise a step. But she has outgrown the days of whippings, and now she is about to show that she is not to be brow-beaten out of her deliberate resolves. After many delays and stormy discussions, she at length carries her point, and in the year 1778, she becomes the companion of a widow lady, a Mrs. Dawson of Bath.

Before starting from home she was informed on unquestionable authority that Mrs. Dawson was of such an insufferable temper that her companions, succeeding each other rapidly, found it impossible to live with her. These warnings did not discourage Mary, who by the exercise of all her firmness in repelling the impertinences of her employer, and at the same time checking her own temper, not only made her situation a comfortable one, but even succeeded in making Mrs. Dawson a better-mannered woman. We need not here point out how ill-calculated such a situation was to evoke the milder qualities of a young girl's nature, or how adapted it was to call forth all her sternness, and to induce a habit of attacking—at least of returning the attacks of—those who offended her.

After two years' residence with Mrs. Dawson, Mary returned home at the entreaty of her mother, who was at the commencement of an illness that was slowly to linger into death.

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Upon her mother's death, (whom it is needless to say she nursed with the most affectionate solicitude,) Mary bade a final adieu to her father's roof, and became an inmate in the family of her friend Fanny Blood, at Walham Green, near Fulham.

The next important step was made in Mary's life in the year 1783, when she opened a school at Islington, in conjunction with Fanny Blood, and her (own) two sisters. This school, which for a time succeeded excellently, was in the course of a few months moved to Newington Green. From this time till the middle of 1785, Mary actively and perseveringly worked as a teacher of children, and in that capacity was seen to advantage. Her temper, hasty with her equals, was imperturbable with her pupils; a result, perhaps, of the harsh discipline of her own childhood. Her flock of little disciples worshipped her, and their parents were scarcely less enthusiastic in her praise. She was the life and spirit of the establishment. Soon an agreeable circle of friends came round her, amongst whom were Dr. Richard Price, well known for his political and mathematical calculations; Mrs. Burgh, the widow of the author of the "Political Disquisitions;" and a Mr. John Hewlet, a clergyman and master of a boarding school in Shacklewell. At this time also she was introduced to Dr. Johnson, the *then* patriarch regnant of English literature.

With 1785 came events that were important in Mary's life. Fanny Blood's health failed, and she was recommended, in hope of relief for her pulmonic disorder, to try the air of Lisbon. The means resorted to to obtain the sufferer this last chance may well make us smile. A certain Mr. Hugh Skeys, of Dublin, then resident in Portugal, happened to pay his addresses to Fanny, who, urged by Mary, "*in order that nothing should be omitted, which might alleviate, if it could not cure,*" accepted the offer, and made the voyage to Lisbon. Whether Mr. Hugh Skeys was informed of the

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soundness of the wife thus shipped off to him does not appear. Anyhow the marriage took place on the 24th February, 1785.

For a few months subsequent to the wedding, Fanny's health apparently improved, but a decided change for the worse soon supervened, and news was sent home to England that her death was looked for. The impetuous and loving Mary could not endure the thought of her friend passing into awful death uncheered by the voice of her chosen associate of her own sex; so, leaving the school in the hands of her sisters, and borrowing money to defray the expenses of the voyage, she sailed for Lisbon, and arrived there in time to alleviate the last sufferings of Fanny Skeys, who died on the 29th of November, 1785.

On her return to England, she found that her absence had been very injurious to the school, of which she was the main, indeed the sole support. Disheartened at the aspect of affairs, and finding it difficult to work on agreeable terms with her sisters, who, perhaps, resented her superiority, and were frequently aggrieved by her love and tone of domination, she determined to withdraw from Newington, and obtain a situation as governess in some private family. It was just at the time of her coming to this resolution that she wrote a duodecimo pamphlet of one hundred and sixty pages, entitled "Thoughts on the Education of Daughters." Mr. Hewlet, of Shacklewell, who had incited her to the attempt, negotiated the sale of the work for her, and obtained from Mr. Johnson, the bookseller in St. Paul's Churchyard, the magnificent sum of ten guineas for the copyright, which money Mary immediately gave to the father and mother of Fanny Blood, who wanted funds wherewith to move into Ireland.

Sometime in the year 1786, Mary became governess in the family, then resident in Ireland, of Lord Kingsborough, the eldest son of the Earl of Kingston. Her pupils were

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high-spirited girls, who had sworn eternal enmity to the entire race of governesses; and on being informed that an English preceptress, one Miss Wollstonecraft, was about to be placed in authority over them, they conspired to vanquish the said English intruder, and compel her by unceasing persecutions to retire from their island home. But the girls had not made their new governess's acquaintance many weeks before they relinquished hostilities, and were enthusiastic in her praise. With one of them, afterwards Countess Mount Cashel, Mary formed a warm friendship, that lasted till death separated them. With Lord and Lady Kingsborough and their friends she soon became a favourite, so much so, that she entered into the general society of the neighbourhood, and was received by the highest members of it as an equal, and not as a dependant. The kindness that she met with, however, did not altogether shield her from the discomforts and impertinences that every lady, exerting herself in the capacity of a governess, must make up her mind to bear with amusement or indignation.

On one occasion, in a very large party, Mary entered into a long and animated conversation with a lady of rank, who, delighted with her companion, at length begged to know her name and history. "I am Miss King's governess," said Mary with a smile. "Oh!" two flirts of her fan,—a fierce flash of her eyes, and the vulgarian of quality turned away, mentally imploring the hills to fall upon her, and the mountains to cover her!

One can imagine that this circumstance contributed in no slight degree to the formation of Mary Wollstonecraft's opinions on class distinctions, and the unhappy effects of the ordinary female education.

In the August of 1787, Mary quitted Lord Kingsborough's family on the most friendly terms, and came up to London with the daring purpose of earning her livelihood by literature. Mr. Johnson, the publisher of her pamphlet,

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gave her some encouragement; and at Michaelmas, 1787, she entered upon a house in George-street, Blackfriars' Bridge. From our knowledge of life and literature, we should not advise any talented governess in these days to take a like step; but fortune favours the brave, and Mary's rashness was followed by a certain amount of success. She lived sparingly—indeed, with the most exact, even painful economy—and worked hard. Between the date of her coming to London and the autumn of 1790, she published, "Mary: A Fiction," written while in Lord Kingsborough's family; "Original Stories from Real Life," intended for the use of children; a translation, and to some extent a new version of "Young Grandison," from the Dutch; a compilation of extracts, in verse and prose, entitled "The Female Reader," being upon the model of Dr. Enfield's "Speaker;" a translation of Necker's work on "The Importance of Religious Opinions;" an abridgment of "Lavater's Physiognomy;" and a compressed translation from the German of "Salzmann's Elements of Morality:" and besides these works, she contributed largely to the "Analytical Review," which her publisher and good friend, Mr. Johnson, started in 1788. Of the merit of these productions, little can be said, as far as Mary is concerned; in them she appears as a promising pupil in her art, and nothing more; but their number, and the care bestowed upon them, prove her industry in her vocation.

During these three years her earnings must have been encouraging, for they enabled her to have the gratification of substantially assisting her family, already unfortunate, and threatened with yet greater difficulties. That two of her sisters might render themselves fit for offices of tuition in private families, she sent one to school in Paris for two years, and placed the other in a London school; her brother James she first took into her house, and then sent him to Woolwich for instruction, of which latter benefit he made

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good a use that he obtained a respectable situation in the Royal Navy, and was soon made a lieutenant; her brother Charles, articled to an attorney, she freed from a hateful position, and greatly aided, by placing him first with a farmer for instruction, and then fitting him out for America, where he became a prosperous man; and lastly, having taken the perplexed affairs of her father in hand, she attempted to unravel them, and failing in her endeavour gave the once awful old man money, and continued to support him almost entirely by her own exertions till the day of her death. These achievements were well nigh enough, one would think, for a daughter of a large family, who had received no systematic mental training, and had been buffeted rather than brought up. But charity having begun at home was not to end there; and Mary added to her good deeds by taking into her home the orphan child (a little girl, seven years of age) of a deceased friend.

At this time amongst other acquaintances she had for intimate associates, Bonnycastle the Mathematician, George Anderson the Accountant of the Board of Control, Dr. George Fordyce, and Fuseli the celebrated Painter.

We now come to the period when Mary Wollstonecraft commenced a course that obtained her an unenviable notoriety, put her at war with her own sex, at war with the world, and often at war with herself. Hitherto she had been called upon to act in a manner distinct from that which is customary with the majority of educated women; she had had not only to support herself, but also to bear up the numerous members of a sinking family; and to do this she had gone out into the haunts of men, and boldly made her way through all obstacles with the masculine sword—intellect. She had toiled, night after night, even till dawn, over her desk, had gone with her manuscripts—"her copy"—into publishers' offices, had battled for her price, and had passed the ordeal of literary criticism, wincing under the ungenerous sneer, paying back ridicule, and repelling uncharitable

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misconstruction. At first she was extremely sensitive of being known as an authoress, and had recourse to artifices to conceal the fact from her ordinary acquaintances; but ere long she became hardened to the animadversions of society, and proclaimed herself the champion of what are termed "extreme views." She was of *the people*, indeed of the humbler ranks of that not-to-be-defined class; she had smarted under aristocratic insolence, struggled with poverty, writhed under the scorn of the rich; by her talents she had proved herself one of nature's superior works, and hard experience of the world had taught her the real inferiority of the greater part of her social betters. Who can wonder that such a woman, courageous and quick in temper, daring in thought, imaginative, with nervous compassion for the weak, the suffering, the desolate, and the oppressed, trained to manly action by such trials as usually fall only upon men, seised with avidity republican opinions, and cherished those brighter visions of better days, of a heaven upon earth, which, in that infant estate of political philosophy, fascinated and led astray Southey, Wordsworth, and Coleridge.

On the first of November, 1790, appeared that celebrated pamphlet, celebrated alike for its fervid style and false arguments, "Burke's Reflections on the Revolution in France." Against this decrepid body, clad in all the splendour, and robed with the affective grace of Burke's polished but too imaginative mind, Mary did fight—and a victorious fight too, in many respects—armed with the stern logic of the people, and a knowledge of human life acquired in the schools of adversity. The faults of her letter are numerous and glaring, but they are the best kind of faults—arising from honesty, and an excess of zeal; her indignation at the *heartless compassion* that Burke displayed in coldly disregarding the sufferings of the wretched many, and weeping passionately over the catastrophe of the favoured few, in mourning over the plumage, and forgetting the dying bird,

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as Tom Paine brilliantly remarked, made her forget the respect due to such an adversary as she had the honour of contending with; but even in her most furious passages of invective, her censure, or perhaps abuse may be a better term, is just. "Our penal laws," she says, "punish with death, the thief who steals a few pounds, but to take by violence, or trepan a man, is no such heinous offence. For who shall dare to complain of a venerable vestige of the law that rendered the life of a deer more sacred than that of a man? But it was the poor man with only his native dignity who was thus oppressed—and only metaphysical sophists and cold mathematicians can discern this unsubstantial form—it is a work of abstraction, and a *gentleman* of lively imagination must borrow some drapery from fancy, before he can love or pity a man. Misery, to reach your heart, I perceive, must have its cap and bells; your tears are reserved, very naturally considering your character, for the declamation of the theatre, or for the downfall of queens, whose rank throws a graceful veil over vices that degrade humanity; but the distress of many industrious mothers, whose helpmates have been torn from them, and the hungry cry of helpless babes, were vulgar sorrows that could not move your commiseration, though they might extort an alms. 'The tears that are shed for fictitious sorrow are admirably adapted,' says Rousseau, 'to make us proud of all the virtues which we do not possess.'"

This "Vindication of the Rights of Man," had a great sale, and met with as much applause as it did pecuniary success; and inspirited by the praise bestowed on her, Mary commenced "A Vindication of the Rights of Woman," which was quickly completed, and hastily sent through the press to an anxious multitude of readers. With the merits and failings, the impetuous language, and the unwise sentiments of this Vindication, we do not mean to concern ourselves in these pages; but in justice it must be remarked

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that the position and relation of the sexes to each other, are very different now from what they were when Mary Wollstonecraft wrote. As society was then constituted, women were reared to be fools, and men best liked them to be so; while on the other side, men were drunken and debauched, and women generally had not sufficient taste or intelligence to wish their tyrants to be above the brute level. Fifty years has made a great difference; a woman who now-a-days should write such a book as the "Vindication of the Rights of Woman," would richly merit the limbo of Coventry, or confinement in a lunatic asylum, yet we do not hesitate to say that Mary Wollstonecraft's book, with all its absurdities, when regarded as the cry of one suffering under evil days, deserves the sympathy, and even the applause of all good men.

The worst consequences of these two "Vindications" were those that immediately affected the authoress; she became a marked woman; everything that was terrible to the simple imagination of John Bull was believed of her; she was revolutionist, red-republican, deist, atheist, socialist, blasphemer. The best of society were the least merciful upon her, and as if to justify the cruel judgment of the world, she did not hesitate to cultivate the intimacy of those whom the majority of the respectable and religious classes thought of with frantic detestation.

In the September of 1791, the thirty-third year of her age, she gave up her house in George-street, and took good lodgings in Store-street, Bedford Square; and, now that she was in better worldly circumstances, indulged herself in some of those luxuries which cannot be obtained without money. It was in this year that William Godwin first met her, and disliked her, at a dinner-party, at which Tom Paine was present; and it was while living in Store-street that her intimacy with Fuseli, the painter, reached its height. Mr. Fuseli was a married man, and certainly was more

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attached to Mary than, regard being had to his matrimonial position, he had any right to be; but Mary's resolution kept him within the *proper* limits of Platonic love; and when she found that the resistance of his passionate solicitations was too burdensome to her, she wisely, and like a virtuous woman, withdrew to France at the close of the year 1792.

She arrived at Paris in the December of 1792, and renewed her acquaintance with Tom Paine, who introduced her to the principal revolutionary leaders of that capital.

On the 26th of that month, she wrote to Mr. Johnson the following interesting letter:—

Paris, December, 1792.

I should immediately on the receipt of your letter, my dear friend, have thanked you for your punctuality, for it highly gratified me, had I not wished to wait till I could tell you that this day was not stained with blood. Indeed, the prudent precautions taken by the National Convention to prevent a tumult, made me suppose that the dogs of faction would not dare to bark, much less bite, however true to their scent; and I was not mistaken, for the citizens, who were all called out, are returning home with composed countenances, shouldering arms. About nine o'clock this morning, the king passed by my window, moving silently along (excepting now and then a few strokes on the drum, which rendered the stillness more awful) through empty streets, surrounded by the National Guards, who, clustering round the carriage, seemed to deserve their name. The inhabitants flocked to their windows, but the casements were all shut—not a voice was heard, nor did I see anything like an insulting gesture. For the first time since I entered France I bowed to the majesty of the people, and respected the propriety of behaviour so perfectly in unison with my own feelings. I can scarcely tell you why, but an association of ideas made the tears flow insensibly from my eyes, when I saw Louis sitting, with more dignity than I expected from his character, in a hackney coach, going to meet death where so many of his race have triumphed. My fancy instantly brought Louis XIV. before me, entering the capital with all his pomp, after one of the victories most flattering to his pride, only to see the sunshine of prosperity overshadowed by the sublime gloom of misery. I have been alone ever since; and, though my mind is calm, I cannot dismiss the lively images that have filled my imagination all the day. Nay, do not smile, but pity me; for once or twice, lifting my eyes from the paper, I have seen eyes glare

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through a glass door opposite my chair, and bloody hands shook at me. Not the distant sound of a footstep can I hear. My apartments are remote from those of the servants, the only persons who sleep with me in an immense hotel, one folding door opening after another. I wish I had even a cat with me!—I want to see something alive; death in so many frightful shapes has taken hold of my fancy. I am going to bed—and, for the first time in my life, I cannot put out the candle.

M. W.

The prudence that had caused Mary to quit England, did not protect her in Parisian society from forming an attachment that was followed by most unfortunate results. Her lover was a Mr. Gilbert Imlay, a native of the United States of America, who induced her to live with him as wife without the performance of any marriage ceremony, except a solemn private engagement, that as man and wife, they took each other for better and worse. What induced Mary to take so mad and sinful a step as this, it is hard to say. The suggestion of impatience of moral restraint can be made only by the brutal. That she held the ritual of any Christian church in respect, as giving greater sanctity to the marriage vow, than it could otherwise have, no one is called on to believe; for though she had been brought up in the doctrines of the Established Church, she had since the year 1787 (at first partially, and finally altogether) discontinued attendance at public worship. But a light esteem for the ceremonies of an ecclesiastical institution, is no reason for a woman's neglecting to avail herself of the civil protection they may afford. Perhaps she reasoned within herself, "I give myself heart and soul to this man; and if he prove unworthy of me—I would rather be quit of him." Anyhow she took that step for the taking of which there is no motive, where there is no chance of its being one to be repented of, and which a woman is an utter fool to make with any man in the permanence of whose affection she is not perfectly confident.

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Taking a lodging at Neuilly, three miles from Paris, she gave herself up to the novel pleasures of her existence, and, as the tenderly pathetic letters published after her death show, those pleasures were exquisite. Nor did she at this time neglect literature, but worked industriously at her most finished and best work, her "Historical and Moral View of the French Revolution."

In 1793, Mr. Imlay quitted (nominally, for a few weeks) Paris, and the retreat at Neuilly, for the purpose of watching some commercial undertakings at Havre. Circumstances, however, prevented his return, and during that time of terror, Mary was left unprotected. One day on entering Paris, she passed the guillotine, just after a peculiarly disgusting scene of slaughter, and the crimson blood streamed over the pavement on which she trod. She burst into loud exclamations of horror and indignation; when some kind bystander checked her, and implored her to hasten and hide herself from all who had heard her words. The agony she experienced on being informed of the death of Brissot, Vergniaud, and the twenty deputies, she vowed was greater than any pain she had ever felt

In the January of 1794, she joined Mr. Imlay at Havre, and there they lived together till September, during which time she gave birth to a daughter, named Frances, in memory of her old friend Fanny Blood. In September, Mr. Imlay went to London, having prevailed on Mary to return to Paris (Robespierre being dead), where he engaged to join her at the end of two months. In due course, Mary arrived in Paris once more, her journey from Havre having been rendered eventful by four upsets of the coach in which she travelled. But Mr. Imlay failed to join her. Anxious and suspicious she crossed to England, and arrived in London in the April of 1795, when she found her worst fears realised, and the father of her child in the arms of another mistress. She entreated him to return

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to her unimpaired love, but this invitation being neglected she resolved on committing suicide. The design of the frantic woman was conveyed to Imlay, who arrived just in time to prevent her accomplishing her purpose. His feelings were aroused by the circumstances of her despair, and he spoke to her in such terms that she was reconciled to him; and at his request, she immediately undertook a voyage to Norway, to transact some mercantile business for him. It speaks for the elasticity of her spirits, that only a week elapsed between her determination to kill herself, and her setting out for Norway.

Mr. Imlay promised to meet her at Hamburgh on her return from Norway, but the weak and unprincipled man failed to keep his word. By the commencement of October she was again in London, and discovered that the miserable profligate she loved so foolishly cared nothing for her.

She thought of her early days of innocence, the generous strivings of her life, the struggles she had made and the self-denial she had exercised for her brothers and sisters and harsh parents, the blind faith she had cherished in the goodness of what she had been pleased to think "good men;" she thought of her babe, the child of shame, and she thought of all she had sacrificed for a heartless villain! It was night; and in the agony of her soul she took a boat at one of the wharfs, and went down the river. She landed at Putney in the drenching rain; and having first with desperate caution walked up and down the bridge till her clothes were wet through, so that their weight might encumber her, she climbed to the top of one of the barriers, and then leaped head foremost into the black-flowing river.

Mad from life's history,
Glad to death's mystery,
Swift to be hurled—
Anywhere, anywhere
Out of the world!

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In she plunged boldly,
No matter how coldly
The rough river ran,
Over the brink of it,
Picture it—think of it,
Dissolute man!

When in the water she found a difficulty in sinking, and supposing her dress buoyed her up she resolutely pressed the skirts of her petticoats close to her legs. But her desperate attempt was witnessed, and she was saved from the tragic grave she sought.

And now come the incidents in this love drama that tell worse for Mary than any other. Imlay came to her, expostulated with her, vowed that his connection with his mistress would now be terminated; and she, in consequence, positively wrote to him:—"If we are ever to live together again, it must be now. We meet now, or we part for ever. You say you cannot abruptly break off the connection you have formed. It is unworthy of my courage and character to wait the uncertain issue of that connection. I am determined to come to a decision. *I consent then, for the present, to live with you, and the woman to whom you have associated yourself.* I think it important that you should learn habitually to feel for your child the affection of a father. But, if you reject this proposal, here we end. You are now free. We will correspond no more. We will not have intercourse of any kind. I will be to you as a person that is dead."

At first Imlay consented to this extraordinary request, but on second thoughts he recalled his assent, and went off with his charmer to Paris; and in March, 1796, Mary resolved to do what womanly pride ought to have made her do long before—to dismiss her betrayer from her mind.

In spite of Godwin's assurances to the contrary, we are afraid Mary's life, so opposed to what is best calculated to develope the best qualities of woman, had done her character

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irreparable injury. It may be true that she was as lively, as forgetful of self, as cheerful, and as engaging as ever; but we suspect the delicacy of her nature was lost, and that her tendency to masculine faults was scarcely less strong than her admiration of manly virtues.

She and Godwin renewed their acquaintance in the January of 1796; in March she finally banished all hope of Imlay; and positively within six months after that dismissal of her former lover from her mind, she was living in Judd Place West, and receiving Godwin's most tender attentions. These dates are cruel evidence against her. At first they did not marry; but at the commencement of April, 1797, they deemed it advisable to make known the fact of their marriage which had taken place shortly before. The immediate cause of this step was Mary's being on the point of again becoming a mother.

As an instance of the masculine hardness of this inconsistent woman, it ought to be mentioned that, after her return from Norway, and during the most distressing part of her conflict with Imlay, she worked diligently at her "Letters from Norway," and in January, 1796, finished the sketch of a comedy which was never published.

On the 6th of April, 1797, Godwin took possession of a house in the Polygon, Somers Town, and Mary entered it—his wedded wife. It is interesting, and perhaps slightly comic, to read the philosophic Godwin's account of their married life. "Ours was not an idle happiness, a paradise of selfish and transitory pleasures. It is perhaps scarcely necessary to mention that, influenced by the ideas I had long entertained on the subject of cohabitation, I engaged an apartment about twenty doors from our house in the Polygon, Somers Town, which I designed for the purpose of my study and literary occupations. Trifles, however, will be interesting to some readers, when they relate to the last period of the life of such a person as Mary. I will add,

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therefore, that we were both of us of opinion that it was possible for two persons to be too uniformly in each other's society. Influenced by that opinion, it was my practice to repair to the apartment I have mentioned as soon as I rose, and frequently not to make my appearance in the Polygon till the hour of dinner. We agreed in condemning the notion, prevalent in many situations in life, that a man and his wife cannot visit in mixed society but in company with each other, and we rather sought occasions of deviating from, than of complying with this rule. By these means, though, for the most part, we spent the latter half of each day in one another's society, yet we were in no danger of satiety. We seemed to combine, in a considerable degree, the novelty and lively sensation of a visit, with the more delicious and heartfelt pleasures of domestic life."

Unfortunately for those who regard life for the purpose of extracting from it lessons for the production of human happiness, sufficient time was not allowed for a fair trial of this most philosophic marriage; for, after giving birth to a daughter, destined to be the second wife of Percy Bysshe Shelley, just at the conclusion of August, Mary Godwin died on the 10th of September, 1797, from the consequences of her confinement.*

During her acute illness she was most affectionately nursed by Godwin, Mr. Fenwick, Mr. Basil Montague, Mr. Marshal, and Mr. Dyson, and was affectionately attended by Mr. Carlyle, Dr. Fordyce, and Dr. Clarke.

Godwin appears to have derived considerable satisfaction from the fact that "during her whole illness not one word of a religious cast fell from her lips."

* As an instance of how masculine, even coarse, she was latterly in her habit of thought, it should be observed that she was in the custom of laughing at "the fuss" ladies made of their confinements, and declared her intention of quitting her bed and coming down stairs the evening after the birth of her babe.

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She was buried in the yard of the parish church of St. Pancras, Middlesex; and over her grave her friends erected a plain monument, on which is the following inscription:—

MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT GODWIN,
AUTHOR OF
A VINDICATION
OF THE RIGHTS OF WOMAN.
BORN XXIII APRIL, MDCCLIX.
DIED X SEPTEMBER, MDCCXCVII.

Thus perished at the early age of 38, a woman of extraordinary mental powers, and originally of a noble disposition, who with better training in youth, and less hard trials in opening womanhood, might have been a bright ornament to her age. When her death was made known to the world, there were found many who did not hesitate to aver that the Divine Power had cut her days short in order to make her an awful warning to those who lightly regard the marriage bed. Let *us* say farewell to her memory,

Owning her weakness,
Her evil behaviour,
And leaving with meekness
Her sins to her Saviour.

After her death Godwin published, in four volumes, a sketch of her life, and some of her manuscripts that had not before been printed. Amongst these were fragments of an unfinished novel, called "The Wrongs of Woman," a tale in a stilted and inflated style; and her charming letters to the pitiful scamp—Mr. Imlay.

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CHAPTER XX.

WILLIAM GODWIN.

Whoever looks attentively at any tolerably faithful portrait of William Godwin must read the entire character of the man. The gentle expression of the countenance, the calm intelligence of the eyes and high forehead, the pensive air of the slight and regular features of the face, the small tightly-closing lips, indicating an inflexibility of will, ready to be provoked into obstinacy, all tell a truthful tale. Dispassionate (most wonderfully so for a republican in such times), anxious to be free from prejudice, charitable to opponents, cautious in action and courageous in thought, William Godwin was in respect of moral qualifications eminently adapted to play the part of a philosophic teacher, but he lacked one indispensable requisite for such a position —intellectual powers of the highest order. With mental endowments, only slightly, if at all, above average, he engaged in a labour that requires all, and more than all, the genius and iron strength of John Stuart Mill.

Dissent from orthodox views was early inculcated in William Godwin, and he inherited a disposition to question established opinions from at least two generations of his ancestors. His father was a dissenting minister, and so was his grandfather.

On the 3rd of March, in the year 1756, a full century from this present time, William was born at Wisbeach, in Cambridgeshire, where his father presided over a Nonconformist congregation. Four years after his birth he was taken to another village, sixteen miles from Norwich, where his father also had professional employment.

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Probably the boy's education in his early years was a decent one, notwithstanding the humble position of his father, and the large number of little brothers and sisters who had also to be provided for out of the paternal income. Anyhow he was placed with a private tutor at Norwich, in the year 1767, for the purpose of receiving a classical education, and in 1773 he entered as a student the Dissenters' college at Hoxton.

After quitting this seminary he commenced his struggle with the world as a dissenting minister. For some time he officiated at the agreeable little town of Stowmarket, in Suffolk. No agreeable opening to life this for a young man with intellectual aspirations, and already ambitious of literary distinction. Far removed from books and lectures, to be chained to humble—in the eyes of the world, ignominious—duties in a country town, from its size meriting the name of a village; to be ignored by all the educated inhabitants, save the prudent apothecary looking out for patients of all degrees; to be regarded by the well-to-do tradesmen (usually, in country towns, strongly enamoured of the respectability of *the establishment*) with suspicion as "the young dissenting fellow;" and to endure the magnificent patronage of little artizans, who paid an annual sum of 5s. to *their chapel*, must have constituted a bitter experience to the ardent young minister, who confessed that from boyhood he was in the habit of mouthing out the words of Cowley:—

> What shall I do to be for ever known,
> And make the age to come my own.

In 1782, after he had been for five years a Nonconformist preacher, he settled in London, and applied himself wholly to literature. His first work consisted of Six Sermons, which may have attracted attention at Stowmarket, but are certainly not of sufficient power to interest the world of our day. Soon after the publication of these not very felicitous

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efforts, he obtained employment on the *New Annual Register*, an occupation that in all probability supplied him with the greater part of the little money he required for his subsistence.

Between 1782 and 1793 he made repeated but unsuccessful attempts to get the regard of the public by, to use his own words, "writing different things of obscure note, the names of which, though innocent, and in some degree useful, I am rather inclined to suppress." Whatever these "different things" were, the author did not, at the time of penning them, think them deserving of obscurity, for many years after he had established himself in unquestionable notoriety he reflected on these early disappointments with no ordinary bitterness. "I had endeavoured," he candidly stated in the last years of his long life, "for ten years, and was as far from approaching my object as ever. Everything I wrote fell dead-born from the press. Very often I was disposed to quit the enterprise in despair. But still I felt ever and anon impelled to repeat my effort." But he was now to burst forth from obscurity, and become a by-word for astonishment and horror on the lips of simple men!

Aroused by the events of the French Revolution, and surrounded by men discussing with freedom, and perhaps licentious irreverence, the questions of politics and morals, that the state of European society naturally suggested to all fairly intelligent people, Godwin worked enthusiastically and honestly, writing his "*Enquiry concerning Political Justice, and its Influences on General Virtue and Happiness*," a work which he believed was destined to produce great and lasting effects on the human race. It was published in 1793, and immediately gained the attention its author so much coveted, and in due time the condemnation it so richly deserved. At first, the originality of the views of the writer was the universal topic; no one, however opposed he might be to the sentiments, thought of questioning their being the

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peculiar offspring of Godwin's productive mind, though on a careful examination, any student, tolerably well read in the European, and especially French, literature of the close of the last century, will find that there is scarcely a single speculation in "The Enquiry," which may not be traced to a writer previous to Godwin. But to do him justice it must be observed that, though his friends proclaimed him a fountain of new thought, he never advanced any especial claim to originality. Indeed, on one occasion, he wrote with a candour and an egotism, alike remarkable, and showing how barren he was of veneration for his great contemporaries, "Every author, at least for the last two thousand years, takes his hint from some suggestion afforded by an author that has gone before him, as Sterne has very humourously observed, and I do not pretend to be an exception to this rule."

The praise due to Godwin for his part in the "Political Justice," is for the calm temper, the patience, and philosophic courage with which he displays and supports the extreme views of the socialists. He had a sincere respect forhumanity, a perfect reliance on the mental powers of his race; as long as he was engaged with thinking, honestly, earnestly, and to the very best of his ability, he believed it was impossible to go astray. And in this confiding spirit, troubled only by occasional twinges of alarm at the conclusions at which he arrived, he advanced views calculated to hurl man from civilization, back into a state immeasureably worse than the lowest state of merely natural barbarity.

On marriage he made the following astounding remarks. "The evil of marriage, as it is practised in European countries, extends further than we have yet described. The method is, for a thoughtless and romantic youth of each sex to come together, to see each other for a few times, and under circumstances full of delusion, and then to vow eternal attachment. What is the consequence of this?

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In almost every instance they find themselves deceived. They are reduced to make the best of an irretrievable mistake. They are led to conceive it their wisest policy to shut their eyes upon realities, happy if, by any perversion of intellect, they can persuade themselves that they were right in their first crude opinion of their companion. The institution of marriage is a system of fraud; and men who carefully mislead their judgments in the daily affairs of their life, must always have a crippled judgment in every other concern . . . .

"Add to this, that marriage, as now understood, is a monopoly, and the worst of monopolies. So long as two human beings are forbidden, by positive institution, to follow the dictates of their own minds, prejudice will ever be alive and vigorous. So long as I seek, by despotic and artificial means, to engross a woman to myself, and to prohibit my neighbour from proving his superior claim, I am guilty of the most odious selfishness. Over this imaginary prize men watch with perpetual jealousy; and one man finds his desire and his capacity to circumvent as much excited, as the other is excited to traverse his projects and frustrate his hopes. As long as this state of society continues, philanthropy will be crossed and checked in a thousand ways, and the still augmenting stream of abuse will continue to flow."

But what distinguishes the work from most other political writings is the anxiety the author continually betrays lest his teachings should incite men to a hearty attempt to carry out his views. Think with me, but do not act as if you did; regard marriage as a degrading institution, but keep true to your wife; be penetrated with a sense of the propriety of equally dividing capital amongst the individual members of our race, but keep all you have got and don't throw it away to the poor; declare that all the children of a community ought to be educated in public nurseries, but

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be resolved not to make over your own offspring to the care of a guardian. Such is the tone of this remarkable treatise. The fact is, Godwin was of a merciful and humane disposition, and, though his faith in the inspiration of the understanding of man would not allow him to reject the results of his reasonings, he shuddered at the thought of ignorant men rising at his words, and pulling down the entire fabric of society. He therefore cautions his readers against thinking that his object was to arouse them to any other work, but that of mental and moral self-culture. His political views were wise, and based on everlasting justice, but they required for their exhibition mankind to be free from ambition, avarice, lust of the flesh and eye, and revenge;—first, men were to purge themselves of sin, and then they were to bake their bread, rear their children, and do their half-hour of work *per diem*, according to his everlasting code of morals. A strange style this, for an address on politics to erring mortals, and starving populations tumultuously clamouring for labour and bread!

For this publication Godwin was paid £700; but much of this sum was paid him in advance, before publication, for his maintenance while composing it. Within a twelvemonth after the appearance of the "*Political Justice*," he published his well-known novel "Caleb Williams." His account of the labour and great mental exertion this by no means faultless fiction demanded of him, should be read with care by those superficial and conceited people (sadly too many in the world!) who, with scarce the power of penning a fairly interesting epistle, think they could produce a good novel without any painful effort. "I devoted," writes Godwin, when describing the progress of this work, "about two or three weeks to the imagining and putting down hints for my story, before I engaged seriously and methodically in its composition. In these hints I began with my third volume, then proceeded

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to my second, and last of all grappled with my first. I filled two or three sheets of demy writing-paper, folded in octavo, with those memorandums. They were put down with great brevity, yet explicitly enough to secure a perfect recollection of their meaning, within the time necessary for drawing out the story at full, in short paragraphs of two, three, four, five, or six lines each.

"I then sat down to write my story from the beginning. I wrote for the most part but a short portion in any single day. I wrote only when the afflatus was upon me. I held for a maxim, that any portion that was written when I was not fully in the vein, told for considerably worse than nothing. Idleness was a thousand times better in this case, than industry against the grain. Idleness was only time lost; and the next day, it may be, was as promising as ever. It was merely a day perished from the calendar. But a passage written feebly, flatly, and in a wrong spirit, constituted an obstacle that it was next to impossible to correct and set right again. I wrote, therefore, by starts; sometimes for a week or ten days not a line. Yet all came to the same thing in the sequel, On an average, a volume of "Caleb Williams" cost me four months, neither less nor more.

"It must be admitted, however, that during the whole period, bating a few intervals, my mind was in a high state of excitement. I said to myself a thousand times 'I will write a tale, that shall constitute an epoch in the mind of the reader, that no one, after he has read it, shall ever be exactly the same man that he was before.'"

When the tale was almost completed, Godwin, conceding to the urgent entreaties of a friend, allowed him a perusal of the manuscript. On the second day the sheets were returned by the borrower with the following note—"I return you your manuscript because I promised to do so. If I had obeyed the impulse of my own mind, I should have thrust it in the fire. If you persist, the book will infallibly

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prove the grave of your literary fame." So affected was Godwin by this criticism, that he for a brief space was inclined to discontinue his labours, and not to finish the tale, but his second resolve was more manly, and worthy of an artist. "Caleb Williams" was published, and was eminently successful, the publisher making an excellent bargain, for Godwin was paid only £84.

About the time of the publication of "Caleb Williams," an event took place that caused no small excitement throughout the entire kingdom, and was of deep interest in the circle of Godwin's immediate friends, amongst whom were Holcroft, Thelwall, Horne Tooke, and Canning. This last-named celebrated man (who, by the bye, did not know much of Godwin), allied himself, as is well known, in early life, with the Socialists, and was just at this time converted to reasonable opinions by a strange exhibition of the violence and fool-hardiness of his companions. "Canning's conversion from popular opinions," says Scott, "was strangely brought round. While he was studying in the Temple, and rather entertaining revolutionary opinions, Godwin sent to say that he was coming to breakfast with him, to speak on a subject of the highest importance. Canning knew little of him, but received his visit, and learned to his astonishment that, in expectation of a new order of things, the English Jacobins designed to place him, Canning, at the head of the revolution. He was much struck, and asked time to think what course he should take; and having thought the matter over, he went to Mr. Pitt, and made the anti-Jacobin confession of faith, in which he persevered, until — Canning himself mentioned this to Sir R. W. Knighton, upon the occasion of giving a place in the Charter-house, of some ten pounds a-year, to Godwin's brother. He could scarce do less for one who had offered him the Dictator's curule chair." Towards the end of 1794, Pitt struck a stern but futile blow at the advocates of ultra-

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liberal opinions. Horne Tooke, Thelwall, Hardy, and others were arrested, and put on their trial on a charge of high treason. In October Judge Eyre delivered to the grand jury a charge which brought down upon him a well-merited castigation from Godwin, who instantly published "Cursory Strictures" upon it, in the columns of the "Morning Chronicle," then edited by Perry. These strictures were supposed at the time to have been of great service to the accused; but the best defence, and the real strength of the so-called conspirators consisted in the foolish petulance and bluster of their calumniators. Rulers had not then learnt, often as the lesson had been put before them by history, that the progress of popular opinion is no more checked by the removal of its advocates, than the process of fermentation is put an end to by skimming off the foam that rises to the surface of the working liquor. Very undignified, indeed "very small" was the aspect of government, when the verdict of "Not Guilty" was pronounced, and those selected to be the victims of political bigotry were declared the victors in the legal contest. When Holcroft, on being liberated, left the dock, he crossed the court, and took his seat by the side of Godwin. While the two friends were conversing—the one with a flash of triumph giving emphasis to his habitual air of defiance, and the other, gentle and composed, even in that moment of excitement—Sir Thomas Lawrence made that spirited profile sketch of them, that passed into the possession of Francis Broderip, Esq.

From a date somewhat previous to the publication of the "Political Justice," Godwin was on terms of familiar intercourse with some of the first men of his time, and he never, even in times of great pecuniary difficulty, failed to maintain that footing in distinguished society, which, even in money-worshipping England, a man of allowed talent can almost always command. He was a constant associate of Lord Lau-

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derdale, Fox, and Sheridan, and was the intimate friend of Curran, Grattan, and a host of other illustrious characters.

In 1797, Godwin published the Enquirer, a collection of essays on moral questions, not calculated to prove him entitled to a first rank amongst philosophic writers, but displaying to advantage the amiability and truthfulness of his character, and the sagacity and soundness of his understanding, when exercised upon subjects within the range of a healthy, but not all-comprehensive mind. In the same year he married Mary Wollstonecraft, whose sad story has already been told; and in the following year he edited her not very valuable posthumous works, and added to them, from his own pen, a sketch of her life, written in a frank and affectionate, but too defiant strain.

In 1799 he published another novel, for which he obtained four hundred guineas, called "St. Leon: a tale of the Sixteenth Century," a tedious and awkward performance, the hero of which becomes possessed of the two great secrets the Alchemists of so many nations had toiled for in vain. In 1800 he visited Ireland, and was greeted by the *patriots* of that island with the flattering cordiality of which Irishmen are such perfect masters. In 1801 he married again; the object of his affection, in this second selection, being an accomplished and well-looking widow lady who, in the year 1803, presented her husband with a son. This son, afterwards William Godwin the younger, became a parliamentary reporter, and the contributor of many pleasant and promising articles to the magazines, but his days were cut short by cholera in 1832.

In the year in which his son was born, Godwin published his "Life of Chaucer," which may be regarded as one of his best books. It is a carefully worked up picture of the times in which Chaucer lived, very interesting, and not more open to the charge of inaccuracy than a book written on facts, the dates of many of which are disputed, must be.

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We should like to see this book reprinted, and placed in a cheap, but at the same time respectable and durable, form, within the reach of families.

In the year 1804, appeared Godwin's third novel, *Fleetwood, or the New Man of Feeling*, a positive infliction of stupidity, without the exciting story of "Caleb Williams," totally devoid of plot or interesting descriptions, and disfigured by a clumsy obscenity. Of this licentiousness, though Godwin was guilty *in fact*, we believe him to have been innocent *in intention*, and we see fully to our satisfaction, how he came to fall into so grievous an error;—whatever else he was, Godwin was no poet; he set about writing a novel, as he tells us, mechanically—first he picked up a foundation for a story out of some old legend, then he read up all kinds of old or ordinary books—Monk Chronicles, Prison Calendars, French Romances—and furnished himself with characters and incidents; lastly, he patched his materials together, laboriously and neatly indeed, but still after all it was patchwork. A man, who proceeded on this plan of course stood in need of a model, even in the detail of his narrative; and Godwin, (who, revolutionist as he was, had a great respect for the old) went to the old *classic* novelists of his country, to Fielding and Smollett, and copied them, forgetting to make allowance for the coarseness of the times in which they lived, and the comparative refinement of his own.

Having written ordinary novels Mr. Godwin, as second-rate novelists are prone to do, tried his hand at dramatic composition, and produced a tragedy, christened *Antonio*, about as contemptible a performance as can be found in the entire stock of rubbish the stage possesses in the shape of literature. This tragedy, however, we should state, to avoid chronological confusion, appeared in the year 1800, four years before *Fleetwood*.

In 1801, the attacks that were unceasingly made upon

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The Political Justice, and the severe censures that everyone in the shape of a *respectable* critic, was continually discharging at Godwin's opinions, spurred him to reply; and he gave the world his *Thoughts on Dr. Parr's Spital Sermon*. This pamphlet is very interesting, and breathes a manly spirit. The author makes some very severe reflections on the fact, that as long as there appeared a fair chance of the triumph of revolutionary opinions, men were slow to oppose him, but, that as soon as his cause had met with, at least temporary, defeat, no quarter was allowed him, every scribbler was his enemy, and he was scouted as infamous. He exclaims, too, with justifiable bitterness, against the virulence of his opponents, who would not even give him credit for good intentions; foremost amongst which ungenerous enemies was Mackintosh, with whom Godwin had for years been in habits of friendly intercourse. The following passage from the pamphlet we transcribe, as giving a good specimen of that moral dignity and guileless courage, which were the most agreeable characteristics of the writer. "I know that Dr. Parr and Mr. Mackintosh look with horror upon this doctrine of the progressive nature of man. They cling with all the fervour of affection, to the opinion that the vices, the weaknesses, and the follies, which have hitherto existed in our species, will continue undiminished as long as the earth shall endure. I do not envy them their feelings. I love to contemplate the yet unexpanded powers and capabilities of our nature, and to believe that they will one day be unfolded to the infinite advantage and happiness of the inhabitants of the globe. Long habit has so trained me to bow to the manifestations of truth wherever I recognise them, that if arguments were presented to me sufficient to establish the uncomfortable doctrine of my antagonists, I would weigh, I would revolve them, and I hope I should not fail to submit to their authority. But, if my own doctrine is an error, and if I am fated to die in it, I cannot afflict

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myself with the apprehension of a mistake, which cheers my solitude, which I carry with me into crowds, and which adds somewhat to the pleasure and peace of every day of my existence."

And in the very pamphlet in question, he showed that this mention of philosophic justice and magnanimity was no empty profession, for in his concluding remarks, where he mentioned the noble work of Malthus on Population, he spoke of him as a courteous and worthy adversary, and admitted the soundness of his arguments. "The general doctrine of the *Essay on Population*," says the pamphlet, "is so clear, and *rests on such irresistible evidence*, that this circumstance, together with its novel and unexpected tenour, is apt to hurry away the mind, and take from us all power of expostulation and distinction." And in another place, "The doctrines of the *Essay on Population*, if they *be true as I have no doubt they are*, will be fully understood." We shall have occasion a few pages hence to recur to these remarkable passages.

In 1807, Godwin produced another tragedy, called *Faulkner*,—like his former one, deservedly unsuccessful. During the next year he published an *Essay on Sepulchres*; —a proposal for erecting some memorial of the illustrious dead in all ages on the spot where their remains have been interred. In the preface he says, "I am a man of no fortune or consequence in my country; I am the adherent of no party; I have passed the greater part of my life in solitude and retirement; there are numbers of men who overflow with gall and prejudice against me, (God bless them!) and would strenuously resist a proposal I made, though it were such as from any other quarter they would accept with thankfulness." The essay is remarkable for its proposition to give *all remarkable* men a public monument. "Nor would I," says he, "be over nice in censorship over the illustrious dead; whoever has been truly distinguished for

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talent or action, I should hold worthy of a place; the tomb of Cromwell would teach me many instructive lessons; nor should I object to the monumental record of Judge Tresilion or Titus Oates. It is fit that men, the scourges of their species, or who have memorably dishonoured the figure of man, should be marked with a brand as imperishable as the pure immortality that attends on our genuine benefactors."

In 1815, came forth Godwin's "Lives of Edward and John Phillips, the nephews of Milton." The work was laboriously and not ill-executed; though the writer runs into an indiscreetly warm eulogy of Milton, where he asserts, "There is nothing else of so capacious dimensions in the compass of our literature, (if, indeed, there is in the literary productions of our species) that can compare with the "Paradise Lost." "With respect to the usefulness of the book, some may enquire what object was to be attained to by embalming the memory of such a miserable turn-coat, and crawling flatterer of Charles the Second and James the Second, as was John Phillips; though Edward deserves to be gratefully remembered as the biographer of his uncle.

The next work that came from Godwin's pen was a fourth work of fiction, *Mandeville*; *a Tale of the Seventeenth Century*, which was published, in 1817, by Constable, with whom the author made an agreement when in Scotland. No friend of Godwin's reputation can say more for this novel than that its author did not *mean* it to be so prolix and dull as it unquestionably is.

Mandeville was followed at a distance of three years by an *Inquiry concerning Population*, a rambling, virulent attack on Malthus for those very doctrines which Godwin himself, in 1801, in his reply to Dr. Parr's Spital Sermon, had asserted "to rest on irresistible evidence." Perhaps, in 1801, Godwin, though he was compelled to acknowledge the accuracy of Malthus's stern logic, did not see how completely it destroyed, how it broke and ground to dust, the

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fair and fallacious structure of the *Political Justice*. Godwin's day-dream was a state of society in which capital should be equally divided, and all should work alike; where none should be glutted with luxurious wealth, but also where none should be chilled with penury and want. In reply to this, Malthus came with his *irresistible evidence*, and displayed how much population is a greater power than production, and showed that if it were possible to place the race of man, for a time, beyond the experience and apprehension of poverty, this temporary security from ill would be but a stimulus to population, which would in its turn be followed by an incalculable increase of human suffering. With that courtesy which nowhere is more becoming a gentleman than in literary warfare, Malthus marshalled forth his arguments, and as he struck the death-blow of Godwin's reputation as a political writer, he spoke soft words in praise of his victim's *amiability*, and smiled a treacherous smile. In all probability the gentleness of Malthus's address so perfectly bewitched Godwin that he was unable to discern his danger. Anyhow, it was not long ere he discovered his position, and then bitter indeed was his mortification. For years he brooded over his vexation; he tried to reconcile his views with his adversary's, but could not; he tried to persuade himself that, as he had said in the answer to Dr. Parr's sermon, the danger of over-population was a remote one, but it was impossible for him so to delude himself. At length, after a lapse of *nineteen years*, when it was clear to every one that the *Political Justice* was, as a work of science, worthless and little short of trumpery, he burst forth into a book that is scarcely anything else but one long, savage execration on the victor who had laid him low, a volume of rambling historical sketches and statistical tables that illustrated nothing, and of invective that show only the extent of the writer's sufferings. "Almighty Author of us all! what a thing is man

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that thou hast made, the existence of which, in great numbers, and without strict limitations, is to be counteracted by such sharp menaces, menaces that it is recommended should by no means be left as a dead letter. * * * For twenty years the heart of man in this island has been hardening, through the theories of Mr. Malthus. What permanent effect this may have upon the English character I know not, but I am sure it was high time that it should be stopped. We were learning, at least as many of us as studied the questions of political economy, and these are by no means the most despicable part of the community, to look askance, and with a suspicious eye, upon a human being, particularly on a little child. A woman walking the streets in a state of pregnancy was an unavoidable subject of alarm. A man who was the father of a numerous family, if in the lower orders of society, was the object of our anger. We could not look at a human being with the eye of a painter, as a delicious object of contemplation; with the eye of a moral philosopher, as a machine capable of adorning the earth with magnificence and beauty; or with the eye of a divine, as a creature with a soul to be saved, and destined to the happiness of an immortal existence. Our first question, and that regarded as a most difficult one, was, how he was to be maintained? It was not enough that he was born with the implements and the limbs by which exuberant subsistence is to be produced. It was not enough that there was room for many millions of human beings more than now exist on the face of the earth. We were reduced (oh, miserable slavery) to inquire whether he was born among the easier orders of society, whether he was the son of a father who had a fair "prospect of being able to support his family." We were learning fast to calumniate the system of the universe, and to believe that the first duty it required of us was to prevent too many human beings (that last work of God, that sole

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rnament and true consummation of the orb we dwell in), rom being born into the world. * * * Let us dismiss, now nd for ever, the heart of flint that has disgraced the be- inning of the nineteenth century, and take to ourselves earts of flesh, and pulses that shall beat responsive to all hat can interest or agitate any one of our fellow creatures." This forms a strange contrast to Godwin's usual tone in cientific discussion.

Between 1824 and 1828, at intervals of a year, Godwin ublished the four volumes of his excellent *History of the Commonwealth*. This is emphatically Godwin's best work, nd its excellence is very much owing to the fact that it as a subject well adapted to his powers. He was a labori- us and accurate student, was above political prejudice (and hat is great praise when said of any man—especially of a evolutionist) was scrupulously truthful, had a sufficient nowledge of human nature, and wrote agreeably. He had ot a wide-enough mental range to write a sound work on olitical or Moral Philosophy, nor had he the imagination, he power of minute observation, and the vigor of mind equisite for the production of a good novel; but he was a trong man for historical labour which, as the world becomes ore and more enlightened it grows more and more ready acknowledge, requires a far less high mental organization an the task of fictitious literature.

The character of Cromwell, as drawn by Godwin, is, with e exception of a few touches, identical with that which r. Carlyle's remarkable pen has made so familiar to the orld. Doubtless the talented editor of Cromwell's letters d studied with attention Godwin's history.

Laborious to the last, Godwin brought out, in 1830, nother poor novel called, Cloudesley, which was followed by commonplace treatise entitled, "*Thoughts on Man*" &c. is last work was a respectable production for such a veteran. was the "*Lives of the Necromancers*" from the earliest

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ages, down to the famous trial of Amy Duny and Rose Cullender, for witchcraft at Bury St. Edmunds, Suffolk, in the year 1664, before Sir Matthew Hale, and when Sir Thos. Browne was in court who (on being asked his opinion by Sir Matthew Hale) gave it as his opinion that the accused were guilty.—The poor wretches were hanged.

But with all his hard toil, Godwin's was a life of penury. In 1816, his poverty was so generally understood in literary circles, that Byron took steps (which, however, friends rendered ineffectual) to present him with £600. And during the period of his second marriage he endeavoured to increase his means by keeping a book shop in Skinner Street, and selling thereat children's books of his own composition, under the assumed name of Edward Baldwin, his own being so hateful to the public. The late Sir Thomas Noon Talfourd states that these little books were published under the auspices of "M. J. Godwin and Co.," so we suppose the assumed title was changed during the course of the undertaking. The shop, however, did not prosper, for Talfourd tells, in his winningly simple and affectionate manner, a story of Godwin asking him to lend him £150, the very day after their introduction to each other. The young special pleader was sincerely annoyed at not being able to comply with the request, and with much confusion said so. "Oh dear," said the philosopher, "I thought you were a young gentleman of fortune; don't mention it, don't mention it; I shall do very well elsewhere." "And," adds that delightful *gentleman*, Talfourd, "then, in the most gracious manner, he reverted to our former topics, and sat in my small room for half an hour, as if to convince me that my want of fortune made no difference in his esteem."

In his later years Godwin obtained a sinecure in the exchequer, worth about £200 a year, connected with the custody of the Records; and in the residence attached to this appointment in New Palace Yard, he died, on the 7th

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of April, 1836, at the great age of eighty years, his only son having died four years before.

He was buried in the churchyard of St. Pancras, where, as has been seen, Mary Wollstonecraft was buried; and his funeral was attended by his grandson (the son of the poet Shelley), the poet Campbell, Dr. Unwins, and the Rev. J. H. Caunter.

From the remarks that have been made in the course of this Memoir, it may be seen that we have no very high estimate of Godwin's mental powers, or of his attainments, and that of all his productions we have the least respect for his works of fiction. Indeed, if that awful regard we cherish towards the dead did not restrain us from uttering words ready to run from our lips, we should cite Godwin as instance of how bad a celebrated English novelist can be. "Caleb Williams" was his best work of fiction, for it had what none of his other novels had—the foundation of a wild and improbable, but still a fascinating story. With such subject matter it is singular how the tale is so bad a one. Its descriptions of scenery are awkward and stilted, the delineations of character are clumsy and unreal, and the social pictures—the conversations, the tea-party politenesses, the ball-room squabbles—are ridiculous to the last degree of absurdity. One of the heroines is a close copy of Pamela, and one of the country gentlemen is a servile reproduction of what is worst in Squire Western. Plagiarism dominates every line; and the plagiarism is of the very worst kind, for in repeating the early novelists Godwin made no allowance for the difference of their times and his own, in respect of refinement and intelligence. Still, with all its painful faults, "Caleb Williams" interests and remains popular, affecting the polished reader with alternate fits of disgust and pathos, even as "Black-eyed Susan" does upon the stage. But every novel that Godwin published after his first was utterly bad, and every one was

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worse than its predecessor. "Fleetwood" is full of high-strained theatrical bombast, without one touch of nature, and it is also prosy and immoral. "*St. Leon*" is prolix and wearisome, without a gleam of genius. "*Mandeville*" is yet worse; and "*Cloudesley*" is beneath contempt.

There was good reason why Godwin did not succeed in that branch of literature, in which he was ambitious of winning applause. In the first place his mental powers were only respectable—and merely good intelligence is not enough for a master of fiction. Talfourd, prone in the warmth of his affectionate nature and the generosity of his polished mind, to over-rate the capacities of his companions, has said of Godwin, "he had no imagination, no fancy, no wit, no humour, or, if he possessed any of those faculties, they were obscured by that of pure reason." In the second place Godwin's early social position, (as the son of a dissenting minister, educated at a dissenters' school, and as such debarred from educated circles, during those years when men are most observant of trifles and most pliant) caused him to be as ignorant as a child, to his dying day, of the manners and tone of decent society. When he raised himself from the obscure rank in which he was born, and became the companion of statesmen and men of letters, he was too old to learn the subtle tricks and turns of drawing-room etiquette, and the demeanour and follies of the fashionable world. Had he been a great poet, of course the memory of the old slough would not have precluded his altering with circumstances, adapting himself to new positions, and learning the new lessons set before him; but, as has been often remarked already, he was not an extraordinary man, in the just sense of that term,—and in nothing did he exhibit the respectable mediocrity of his mind more than in being self-absorbed and unpliant.

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CHAPTER XXI.

WILLIAM BECKFORD.

The history of the Beckford family—its humble origin, the means by which it emerged from obscurity, its mushroom growth, its meretricious splendour, the avidity with which its members were seized upon by the proudest families of our aristocracy, anxious, as the French peeress observed, to *manure* their impoverished soil, and its almost total absorbtion in a great ducal house which *has*, in the slow course of ages, devoured many wealthy upstarts, and *shall* devour many more—may be regarded by the philosophic student of our manners, with amusement and instruction.

Once upon a time there lived at Maidenhead, a tailor, who had two sons, named Thomas and Peter. These sons came up to London, worked hard, and throve. Peter's vocations can only be guessed at by us, but still guessed at, we think, with tolerable certainty; of Thomas's deeds there can be no doubt, for they are matter of history;—he was a clothworker and alopseller, was advanced to the then respectable office of Sheriff of London, and knighted on the 29th December, 1677. He, moreover, married a lady who was the sister of Sir William Thomas, Bart., of Folkingham, in Sussex, and the widow of John Eversfield, Esq., son and heir of Sir Thomas Eversfield, Knt., of Hollington. This was the first step made by the family in the direction of the aristocracy; and it is with this Sir Thomas that polite chroniclers commence, as a rule, their mention of the Beckford pedigree,—the Maidenhead tailor being regarded as a vulgar character, not to be introduced into good society.

Peter Beckford, Sir Thomas's brother, did one great thing

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in life—he begat a child, who bore the paternal name, and devoted himself to military and other pursuits. Pepys, who was on intimate terms (perhaps even had dealings in *cloth*) with the Beckfords, has an interesting statement in his diary concerning this young Peter, which we shall transcribe in full.—"A.D. 1667—8, February 21st. Comes to me, young Captain Beckford, *the slop-seller*, and there presents to me a little purse with gold in it, it being, as he told me, for his present to me, at the end of the last year. I told him I had not done him any service I knew of. He persisted, and I refused; and telling him that it was not an age to make presents in, he told me he had reason to present me with something, and desired me to accept of it, which, at his so urging me, I did." Without a doubt, Pepys here attributes to Captain Beckford a personal connection with the family tailoring establishment, and his doing so suggests the probability of the Captain's original military position, being only in the train-bands. It may, however, be only a careless way of mentioning the *son* (*?*) and nephew of a tailor. Anyhow, this prudent young gentleman, who persisted in liberality to such a powerful state-official as Pepys, made his way in the world. He rose to the rank of Colonel in the army, was made President of the Council in Jamaica in the latter part of Charles the Second's reign, and was appointed Lieut.-Governor (not Governor, as Lord Braybrooke asserts) and commander-in-chief of the island, by William III. This lucky fellow served in a humble capacity in the armament of Penn and Venables, which captured that important island. He died in the year 1710, leaving immense wealth behind him, and two sons, Peter and Thomas, who both lived to be fathers of large families. Peter, the elder of the two, the Speaker of the House of Assembly of Jamaica, died in 1735, and was succeeded first by his eldest son, Peter, who died (s. p.), and then by his second son, William.

This William Beckford quitted Jamaica, and became a

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distinguished man in London. He was twice Lord Mayor of that city, and was its representative in Parliament. As a politician, he was intimately associated with Wilkes, in espousing whose cause he bearded George the Third in an ever-memorable speech in the year 1770, the year of his second mayoralty, and the year of his death. When Dr. Johnson ate that famous veal dinner with Wilkes, he asked the demagogue, with his usual delicacy of feeling, "Where did Trecothick and Beckford learn English?" Upon this vulgar gibe of the Doctor's, Boswell remarks, "That Trecothick could both speak and write good English is well known. I myself was favoured with his correspondence concerning the brave Corsicans. And that Beckford could speak it with a spirit of honest resolution, even to his Majesty, as his faithful 'Lord Mayor of London,' is commemorated by the noble monument erected to him in Guildhall." Then comes editorial Croker, who mentions Mr. Bosville's manuscript note on the above passage, to the following effect:—"The monument records, not the words of Beckford, but what was prepared for him by John Horne Tooke, as agreed on at a dinner at Mr. George Bellas's, in Doctors' Commons." Gifford also says that Beckford "never uttered one syllable of the speech."

The offspring of the old tailor of Maidenhead (of whom we are strong-minded enough to think without emotions of scorn) had become numerous; and the descendants of the prudent Peter manifested a wise prejudice in favour of matrimonial alliances with those who were wealthy, or high-born, or both. The student of the Gentleman's Magazine (that glorious encyclopædia of family gossip) is continually falling upon announcements of the marriage of so and so Beckford, Esq. to Miss so and so with 3,000*l.* a year, or to a great titled lady, or the elevation of a Miss Beckford by wedlock to the dignity of nobility. Francis Beckford of Basing Park, Hants, married Lady Alicia Bertie, daughter of Peregrine,

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Duke of Ancaster and Kasteven; and a Miss Elizabeth Beckford became the wife of Thomas Howard, 2nd Earl of Effingham; and Harriet Beckford, the niece of the demagogue Lord Mayor, married her wealthy cousin, of West Indian estate, Andrew Arcedeckne, of Glevering Hall, Suffolk.

The opulence and aristocratic magnificence of the family culminated in the persons of the child and grandchildren of the Lord Mayor, or, as he was more generally known, Alderman Beckford. The alderman married Maria, daughter and co-heir of the Hon. George Hamilton, M.P. for Wells (a very wealthy man), the second surviving son of James, sixth Earl of Abercorn, and by her had one only child and heir, William Beckford, Esq., the author of "Vathek," and the subject of this memoir. This lady, moreover, was descended from a female branch of the ancient Scotch family, Hannay, of which Mr. James Hannay, the brilliant novelist, is a member.

Alderman Beckford (as has been already stated) died in the year 1770, during his second mayoralty,—'perchance,' said his political enemies,—'punished with death for his impious insolence to George the Third.' His heir, William Beckford, was then only ten years old. The Alderman's death was really caused by his parsimony, which was as remarkable as his profusion; positively with all his wealth he allowed the gout to kill him, from denying himself through motives of economy a proper quantity of Madeira wine.

As one destined on arrival at manhood to enter upon the enjoyment of a princely fortune, and as a member of the noble family of Hamilton, young Beckford was wisely educated in such a manner that he should adorn his distinguished position. Even before his father's death the advice of Lord Camden and of Chatham had been sought as to the best course of instruction that could be prosecuted by the infant Attalus; and after the alderman's demise, no pains were

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spared in the cultivation of the boy's quick and versatile genius. The result of this tutorial care was that he acquired a good knowledge of Latin and Greek, was an accomplished modern linguist (speaking five European languages, and writing three with ease and critical delicacy), was a respectable Persian and Arabic scholar, was a skilful artist with his pencil, and was a proficient in music, the science and art of which he studied under Mozart. In person he was scarcely less gifted than he was in mind, for, though his stature was not above the average height, he was formed with singular grace, and his features were not only expressive of mental power but were gifted with that subtle witchery of fascination, that does not always accompany genius, though it is never found without it.

He was early introduced to continental life; and in his nineteenth year was presented at Paris to Voltaire, then a mere skeleton, within whose ghastly walls the lamp of genius still burnt bright. "Young Englishman," said the aged Frenchman, placing his skinny hand with gentleness on the head of the brilliant youth, "I give you the blessing of a very old man."

In this same year he published his first work; *Biographical Memoirs of Extraordinary Painters*, the commencement of which was made for no other purpose than to make fun of the old housekeeper of Fonthill Abbey, Wilts (the estate Alderman Beckford purchased). This venerable official used to conduct the *sight-seers* who were admitted to a view of Fonthill, through the picture gallery, and to give them a history of the paintings and their painters, the facts of which were drawn in equal proportions from a failing memory and a dishonest imagination. Beckford, chancing to discover this amusing feature of his establishment, thought it would be more comfortable to his domestic and more satisfactory to the country bumpkins, to have one set and unvarying account; so he forthwith wrote a catalogue of his collection,

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enriching it with critical remarks on the artistic productions of Og of Bashan, Waterslouchy of Amsterdam, Herr Sucrewasser of Vienna, and many other celebrated painters. Of course so gifted a humourist as Beckford did not fail to make his list of pictures the medium of much happy satire on living artists.

Young Beckford was still in his twentieth year when he wrote and published his "Vathek, an Arabian tale," which obtained for him to his dying day the name of *Vathek* Beckford, in the same way that Lewis's first work procured him the title of *Monk*. Strictly speaking, "Vathek" is not a novel, but one of the *renaissance romances*, for it concerns itself hardly at all with the subjects of human interest, and is built up almost entirely of occurrences that can never happen under the present course of nature. It is a voluptuous picture of the sensual crimes, and impious ambition of an eastern monarch whose soul, at the conclusion of the tale, is damned to all eternity for his vices of lust and arrogance, into which he has been seduced by a Giaour. It is difficult to give any definite judgment on it as a work of fiction, for it contains many passages which are good or bad, according to the views of him that considers them. There is much humour, and there is much delicate satire in its scenes; and to such a pitch of insolent mirth does the author indulge his love of ridicule, that without a doubt he frequently turns upon the very book he is writing—the very work itself—and makes it the butt of his boisterous humour; but still, after making all allowances for the eccentricity of the author's intention, we are compelled to think that the laughter he in places excites against himself, he never intended to provoke. Again, as the narrative draws to an end, it becomes tedious—at least it lacks the freshness and warmth of the earlier parts; and that this should be so is no wonder, for marvellous to relate the entire tale was composed at *one sitting*, of three *days, and two nights' dura-*

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tion, during which period of sustained exertion the author was supported by copious draughts of wine, as well as by the inspiration of his subject. Perhaps this literary feat has never been equalled; for the length of the tale is at least two-thirds of *one* volume of an ordinary three volume novel. As a specimen of English composition it may not be regarded critically, for Beckford wrote it in French, and the translation of it into English is not by the author himself, though he awarded it his approval. Byron's youthful imagination was strongly impressed by the extravagance of Vathek's crimes, and the splendour and refinement of his voluptuousness; and when his judgment was matured, he retained (probably from the influence of early association) his admiration for the 'Arabian Tale.' "Your account," says his lordship, in a letter to Rogers, in the year 1818, "of your visit to Fonthill is very striking; could you beg of *him* for *me* a copy in MS. of the remaining *tales?* I think I deserve them, as a strenuous and public admirer of the first one. I will return it when read, and make no ill use of the copy, if granted." These tales, which were a continuation of Vathek, were never published. In spite of Byron's praise, and the sensation the object of it caused at the time of its publication, we are bold enough to think Vathek very faulty as a work of art, faulty in respect of the brutal character of many of its incidents, faulty in its absence of enough pleasing pictures to relieve the ferociousness, faulty in respect of its inflated style, and faulty in respect of many passages of inexcusable obscenity; and we are also audacious enough to say, in the teeth of authority, that were such another tale, just as original and imaginative and careless, to be offered for sale now in manuscript, no London publisher would purchase the copyright. The translation of Vathek was originally published in 1786.

In 1780, Beckford made an extended continental tour, entering the most distinguished society of the capitals he

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visited, and regarding everything with that freshness of animal spirits, that befits the sunny dawn of life, and looking upon the gravest of men and matters with the self-confidence and hilarity natural to a youth endowed with an annual income of upwards of £100,000. His diary, kept during this tour, is about the best and most fascinating of the innumerable European sketch-books that have at different times issued from the press. The blithe-hearted lad found Ghent "a large, ill-paved, plethoric, pompous-looking city." At Antwerp he sauntered about the cathedral, and during the celebration of High Mass sat on "a lofty perch" by the side of his acquaintance, Mynheer Van Den Bosch, the first organist of the place. At the Hague he wrote, "I went to dine at Sir Joseph Yorke's, with all nations and languages. Amongst the company were two honourable boobies and their governor, all from Ireland. The youngest, after plying me with a succession of innocent questions, wished to be informed where I proposed spending the carnival. 'At Tunis,' was my answer. The questioner, not in the least surprised, then asked who was to sing there? To which I replied, 'Farinelli.' This settled the business to our mutual satisfaction." In Bavaria he writes: "July 23. We were driven in the evening to Nymphenburg, the Elector's country palace, the bosquets, jets d'eaux, and parterres of which are the pride of the Bavarians. The principal platform is all of a glitter with gilded Cupids and shining serpents spouting at every pore. Beds of poppies, hollyhocks, scarlet lychnis, and other flame-coloured flowers, border the edge of the walks, which extend till the perspective appears to meet and swarm with ladies and gentlemen of party-coloured raiment. The Queen of Golconda's gardeners in a French opera are scarcely more gaudy and artificial. Unluckily too, the evening was fine, and the sun so powerful that we were half roasted before we could cross the great avenue and

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enter the thickets, which barely conceal a very splendid hermitage, where we joined Mr. and Mrs. Trevor, and a party of fashionable Bavarians.

"Amongst the ladies was Madame la Comtesse, I forget who, a production of the venerable Haslang, with her daughter, Madame, de Baumgarten, who has the honour of leading the Elector in her chains. These goddesses stepping into a car, vulgarly called a cariole, the mortals followed and explored alley after alley and pavilion after pavilion. Then, having viewed Pagodenburg, which is, as they told me, all Chinese; and Marienburg, which is most assuredly all tinsel; we paraded by a variety of fountains in full squirt, and though they certainly did their best (for many were set agoing on purpose), I cannot say I greatly admired them.

"The ladies were very gaily attired, and the gentlemen, as smart as swords, bags, and pretty clothes could make them, looked exactly like the fine people one sees represented on Dresden porcelain. Thus we kept walking genteely about the orangery, till the carriage drew up and conveyed us to Mr. Trevor's."

Here is a picture of the court at Naples! "I jostled along to the presence chamber, where his Majesty was dining alone in a circular enclosure of fine clothes and smirking faces. The moment he had finished, twenty long necks were poked forth, and it was a glorious struggle amongst some of the most decorated who first should kiss his hand, the great business of the day. Everybody pressed forward to the best of their abilities. His Majesty seemed to eye nothing but the end of his nose, which is doubtless a capital object.

"Though people have imagined him a weak monarch, I beg leave to differ in opinion, since he has the boldness to prolong his childhood and be happy, in spite of years and conviction. Give him a boar to stab, and a pigeon to shoot

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at, a battle-dore, or an angling rod, and he is better contented than Solomon in all his glory, and will never discover, like that sapient sovereign, that all is vanity and vexation of spirit."

Beckford liked kings no better than did his father: he associated with them, and feasted with them, but ever and again bursts forth from his lips a bitter sarcasm at their meanness. This is easily to be accounted for. He was clever, rich, powerful, vain, proud, and *a parvenu*.

On his return from this trip, Beckford entered the House of Commons, in which assembly he sat for several parliaments, first as member of Wells, and afterwards as member for Hindon, in the representation of which latter place he was succeeded by Monk Lewis. His politics were liberal; for he was too proud and too *generous* a man to follow the herd of parvenus, in deserting the class to which he and they really belonged. But he was not often in his place in the house; retirement from the general gaze, proud seclusion from the vulgar stare of the fashionable world, was what he courted; and so rarely did he appear in public and gratify the great world with a sight of his presence, that on the occasion of a *call* being made upon all the members of the House of Commons, the most distinguished of the *beau monde* fought against each other for orders of admission to the house—not that they might behold the spectacle of all the members assembled at one time, but that they might rest their eyes on the famous Vathek Beckford.

On the 3rd of May 1783, when he was only twenty-three years of age, with the world lying before him bright in hope, with vast wealth at his command, and the intoxicating flattery of admirers lavished upon him, he married Lady Margaret Gordon, sole surviving daughter of Charles, 4th Earl of Aboyne, which lady in due time presented her youthful husband with two daughters, the eldest, Margaret-

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Maria-Elizabeth, and Susan-Euphemia, both of whom were renowned in their brilliant circles for their beauty and fascinating accomplishments.

Beckford, however, was not a man to be content with the sweet simplicity of domestic life; throughout his delicate and sensitive frame there was a strong, a terrible, and eventually an overpowering element of carnal passion. From an early period of life he was everything that is implied by that sickening term "a man of pleasure," and ere long he without a doubt became all that the sophisticated imagination can conjure up of the dark, the brutal, and the revolting for "a man of sin."

He quitted the country that gave him birth, impelled by what motives charity forbids us to suggest, and after making a prolonged tour in Spain and Portugal (his adventures in which country he subsequently published in some letters), he purchased an estate in Cintra, and built for his residence a noble palace worthy of such a peerless clime. But dissatisfaction followed him to the south, and as soon as he had completed the adornment of his palace of art, he conceived a dislike to it, and left it—not to return to it with others, 'when he had purged his guilt,' but for ever.

When Byron visited Cintra, the mansion was in ruins.

"There thou, too, Vathek, England's wealthiest son,
Once formed thy paradise; as not aware
When wanton wealth her mightiest deeds hath done,
Meek peace, voluptuous lures was ever wont to allure.
Here didst thou dwell; here scenes of pleasure plan,
Beneath yon mountain's ever beauteous brow;
But now, as if a thing unblest by man,
The fairy dwelling is as lone as thou!
Here giant weeds a passage scarce allow
To halls deserted, portals gaping wide;
Fresh lessons to the thinking bosom, how
Vain are the pleasuunces on earth supplied;
Swept into wrecks anon by time's ungentle tide."

Childe Harold, Canto I.

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Beckford returned to England, and took up his abo upon his estate in Wiltshire. During the life of the Lo Mayor, Fonthill Abbey was destroyed by fire, which co sumed property valued at 30,000*l.*; and it was re-built c a magnificent scale, and at great cost. But the new mansio was erected on a bad site; so it was pulled down by Vathe and *the* famous Fonthill Abbey was built in its stead. Som idea may be formed of the magnificence of this habitatio from the fact that the exact cost of the *building* was 273,000 Such was the price of the casket, and the treasures tha were stored in it were valuable in proportion. To use Haz litt's description, it was, in a word, a desert of magnificence a glittering waste of laborious idleness, a cathedral turne into a toy shop, an immense museum of all that was mos curious and costly, and, at the same time, most worthless, i the productions of art and nature. Ships of pearl and sca of amber were scarce a fable there; a nautilus's shell, sur mounted with a gilt triumph of Neptune, tables of agate cabinets of ebony, and precious stones, painted window shedding a gaudy crimson light, satin borders, marble floors and lamps of solid gold—Chinese pagodas and Persian tapestry, all the splendour of Solomon's temple displayed i miniature! Amongst other attractions the palace had a rare and excellent library, and a magnificent picture gallery in which the paintings of Breughel, Cuyp, Titian, Hondekooter Polemberg, and other great artists figured.

The most remarkable architectural feature of the new Abbey was a lofty tower, 280 feet in height, on which Beck ford expended a vast treasure of wealth and care. The history of this tower is interesting. On one occasion when it was nearly finished, it caught fire during the night, and for miles round afforded the grand spectacle of one huge sword of flame thrust into the black cope of heaven. Far and near the alarm of fire was given, farm-steads were roused, and men sprung to their horses, and urged them to

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the scene of destruction; from every village men and women raced across the country till their heartstrings were ready to burst; through the lanes from all the country towns, great and small, and from all the seats of the surrounding aristocracy, dashed fire engines, covered with shouting men, and drawn by horses straining onwards at a furious gallop. What clamour, what uproar, and confusion around the doomed tower! But its owner, in a quite retired corner of the grounds, stood in happy composure, enjoying the inimitable spectacle accident had provided for him.

Nothing disheartened by the catastrophe, but rather provoked by it to gratify his whim at all cost, Beckford set about re-building the tower with an enthusiasm of eagerness that almost indicated, in the opinion of many, unsoundness of mind. Workmen were engaged from all quarters, far and near; and vehicles and beasts were hired, without regard to expense or the convenience of others, for the purpose of conveying the materials for the edifice. The agricultural labour of the entire district was put to a dead stop, because all the carts and waggons and farm horses the country contained were employed in the service of the millionaire. Even royalty was compelled to wait the pleasure of the commoner; for the works of St. George's Chapel, Windsor, were discontinued in order that 460 artisans might toil by night and by day to accomplish the will of the owner of Fonthill. By *night* as well as by day the labour was continued, the masons having torches fastened to the handles of their trowels. It was a strange sight to the traveller in the hours of darkness, to see far away, through the stern blackness, a column of dancing lights, reaching from the earth's floor to its ceiling. It is said that Beckford in his insolent and wild imagination found unspeakable pleasure in walking upon the terraces that surrounded his palace, and regarding the strange creation of his wealth and eccentric humour.

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Amongst other sources of satisfaction with which this spoilt child of fortune was favoured, were the matrimonial alliances formed by his two children. The eldest, Margaret-Maria-Elizabeth, married in the May of 1811, Lieutenant-General James Orde. And on the 26th of April, 1810, the younger, Susanna Euphemia, was united to Alexander (tenth Duke) of Hamilton and Brandon, and in due time became the mother of the present and eleventh Duke, and of Lady Susan Harriet-Catherine, who married in 1832, the Earl of Lincoln (now Duke of Newcastle), from whom she was divorced in the June, 1850.

But the magnificent life at Fonthill was not destined to be of long duration. Beckford's extravagant expenditure embarrassed his means, and he also was deprived by a lawsuit of two large West Indian estates, on which there were *fifteen hundred slaves*. Retrenchment was clearly necessary; and it soon became evident that the Abbey could not be kept up in its wonted splendour. At first Beckford thought of inhabiting a cottage in the park, and allowing his palace to fall to ruin before his eyes, untenanted by man. But this proud resolve gave way before more prudent considerations, and in 1822, Fonthill with all its furniture and extravagant adornments, was sold to Mr. Farquhar, a wealthy anglo-Indian, for a sum between £320,000 and £350,000, Beckford, however, retaining his best pictures and his library.

At the time the property changed hands, the public so long excluded from the splendid mansion of which they had heard so much, were admitted to view its wondrous beauty, and extravagance, and folly. Forthwith all the rank and all the rabble of London flocked down to the scene of interest. Peers and peeresses, the high-born and the beautiful of the most aristocratic quarters of May-fair, struggled along the saloons of Fonthill with the traders of the capital, and adventurous travellers from the most remote provinces

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of the kingdom. It was a rare time for the Wiltshire inns, which were so crowded that no visitor, however wealthy, thought for an instant of demanding the luxury of a private sitting room; and plumed Duchesses were thankful on the payment of enormous sums to obtain, at miserable beer-shops, the sole possession of the loft over the hen house, or the ostler's bed room.

Beckford was over sixty years of age when he sold the magnificent home on which he had lavished so much treasure; and he left it with wounded pride, and a nature utterly depraved. The last years of his life were spent at Bath, where he occupied two houses in Lansdown Crescent, which he united by an arch thrown across the street. This arch was his library, and it was fitted up with every adornment taste could suggest and art achieve. His elegant pursuits, and his grossly voluptuous pleasures he cultivated here not less assiduously than at Fonthill; and there too his strange architectural fondness for towers again broke out, for at an early period of his residence there he built a tower, 180 feet high, the interior of which he filled with his most prized paintings, and his most exquisite pieces of *virtu*. It was Asiatic in style, abounding in gilded lattices and blinds, crimson curtains, and striped ceilings. The interior was a museum of "ornaments of gold filagree, carvings in ivory and wood, Raphaelesque china, goblets formed of gems, others fashioned by the miraculous hands of Benvenuto Cellini," and the valuable productions of Old Franks, Breughel, Cuyp, Titian, Hondekooter, and Polemberg; and from its summit Beckford could gaze (his favourite occupation) upon that other tower standing in its lonely pride at Fonthill. But the latter erection was doomed to early destruction; owing to a radical fault in its architecture it one day fell, and great was the fall thereof. The news of the crash was not long in reaching Bath, but ere its arrival Beckford's wonderful eye (like the eagle's

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capable of looking at the sun) had missed his Babel from the landscape.

In 1834, in his old age, he published the beautiful letters containing the account of his youthful travels; and with them he published other sketches of his continental excursions, but the later letters lack the freshness and hopefulness of the earlier ones, and some passages of them are disfigured by the trail of an impure mind. To the last he retained an unusual degree of mental and physical power.

In his seventy-sixth year he assured Mr. Cyrus Redding that he had never felt a moment's *ennui* in his life." But here either his memory failed him, or with braggart untruthfulness he was endeavouring to conceal from himself remorse for the abuse of his many talents, and the sins of his dishonoured existence.

More fully we care not to speak of this remarkable man's degradation. The anecdotes we could print of his unhallowed career might amuse unhealthy imaginations, but they would shock the pure. One of the best of England's many good women whose father was Beckford's earliest friend, replied to our petition for materials for this memoir in the following words: "I think it a great pity one should be written, so much of the darker side, if truly written, had better be left in oblivion."

To the vulgar the vices and failings of the wealthy and the distinguished are always objects of morbid interest. The little exult in the discovery that the great are after all made of the same poor clay as themselves. And vast opportunities—intellects and the happy accidents of fortune—give the charm of grandeur and variety to that dreariest and most unvaried of all prospects—the dead level of human pollution.

William Beckford died in the spring of 1844, at the advanced age of eighty-four years.—"The rich man also died, and was buried."

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Of Beckford's genius enough has been said. That we hold it in high esteem must be evident to every one who has read this biographical sketch, although of his most famous work we content ourselves with observing, that it is not good of itself, but is merely an indication of the extraordinary powers of its author, a sign of what great things he might have done. It has been remarked to us by one of our most valued literary acquaintance, that Beckford serves to illustrate the history of the House of Hamilton, which though it never is adorned by a chief remarkable by intellect, is fruitful of brilliant cadets, such as the author of Grammont's memoirs, and the celebrated logician. But it may not be inferred from this remark that Beckford was indebted for his mental powers to his mother's family, for William Beckford, Esq. (at one time of Somerly in Suffolk, and afterwards of Hertford in Jamaica), who had no Hamilton blood in his veins, possessed an exactly corresponding genius, as the critic may easily discover upon comparing the works of the two.

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